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Research Problem Review 78-27

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CAREER COUNSELING ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS OF ARMY OFFICERS

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND SOLDIER PRODUCTIVITY TECHNICAL AREA

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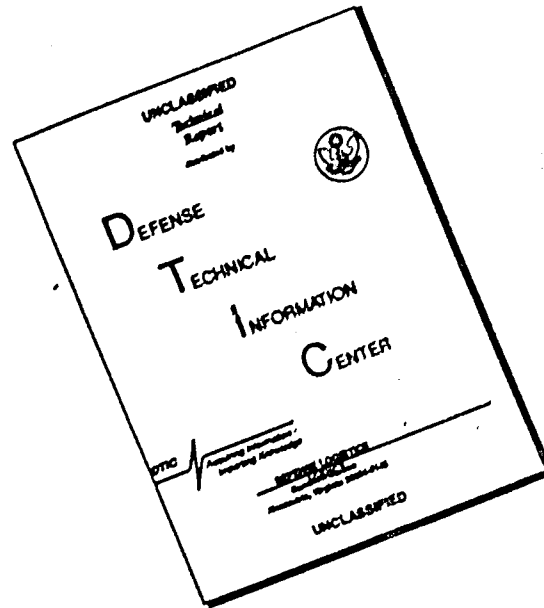
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Career Progression
Systems

14 ARI - Research Problem Review-78-27

6 CAREER COUNSELING ATTITUDES AND
OPINIONS OF ARMY OFFICERS

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FOREWORD

The Career Development & Soldier Productivity Technical Area of the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) conducts research on Army officer and enlisted career progression systems, the role of women in the Army, and occupational qualifications and measurement. Part of the technology base research on career progression, in support of the Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS), has been the design of an experimental computer-aided career counseling system.

This Research Problem Review presents the results of the initial 1972 fieldwork, which showed that Army officers felt a need for more adequate career information and counseling, and that a computer-aided career information system would be acceptable to them. Other ARI publications describe the later research: Technical Paper 294 reported the feasibility of a computer-aided assignment system that used the Infantry Branch as a prototype, Research Memorandum 77-2 described the assignment algorithm used, Research Memorandum 77-3 described the algorithm's successful application to the Quartermaster Branch. Research Memorandum 77-23 presented data bases on alternate specialty selections, and Research Problem Review 77-14 described a 1976 field tryout of the Officer Career Information & Planning System. Continuing investigations focus on cost-benefit analysis of the system.

Work is done under Army Project 2Q162717A766, Manpower Systems Management, FY 78; Task C, Career Progression Systems. The work has been responsive to a series of Human Resource Needs on Officer Career Counseling from the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, including HRN 76-46 and 75-43. At the time of the initial survey, the Officer Personnel Operations (OPO) provided officer career guidance. OPO later became the Officer Personnel Directorate (OPD) in the Army Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN) and is now known as the Officer Personnel Management Directorate in MILPERCEN.

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CAREER COUNSELING ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS OF ARMY OFFICERS

BRIEF

Requirement:

To learn whether Army officers considered that an improved system for providing career information and counseling would be desirable, and if so what kind of information and counseling system they would consider most useful.

Procedure:

A survey questionnaire was given to 615 officers at four Army posts in 1972. The officers were selected to provide a cross-sectional sample as to rank, branch, and type of assignment; 50% were from the combat arms. Interviews supplemented the questionnaire. Officers provided background information on their careers, opinions on how the then-current system affected them, and opinions on four different proposed counseling systems described in the questionnaire. Answers were tabulated and analyzed.

Findings:

Results were consistent with earlier Army investigations. Officers generally felt the need for more guidance and information at critical career decision points. They would prefer counseling by a trained, knowledgeable counselor, but considered a computer-aided system an acceptable source of information for specific data on potential assignments and assignment options.

Officers who lacked information or did not understand the assignment procedures were likely to consider the Army system arbitrary and irrational, somewhat less likely to make the Army a career.

Utilization of findings:

This survey demonstrated enough officer interest to encourage ARI to design and evaluate an experimental computer-aided career counseling system and to further investigate Army career development.

CAREER COUNSELING ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS OF ARMY OFFICERS

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CAREER COUNSELING ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS OF ARMY OFFICERS

BACKGROUND

Three Army studies--the Franklin Institute study on junior officer retention,¹ the Army War College study of military professionalism,² and a study of the officer evaluation system³--have indicated that many officers felt that they would benefit substantially from improvement of the career guidance and counseling system. From the officers' standpoint, the major objections to the current system have been that insufficient information is available when career decisions are being made; preference forms have little influence on assignment; and assignment officers and counselors at career branch are difficult to contact. Research was suggested to improve or aid the present system, making use of recent technological advances.

Present career guidance information is widely fragmented, in sources such as Army regulations and career branch documents which may not be readily available to all officers, and must be updated often to be useful. Lack of information or guidance often forces officers to depend on their own or fellow officers' resources in making important career decisions, a situation contributing to poor career decisions and inefficient use of officers' capabilities. The cost of this inefficient use of manpower and this job dissatisfaction shows the need for an improved career counseling system in the redesigned Officer Personnel Management System (OPMS).

To respond appropriately to these problems, the Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) established a Work Unit originally entitled Information Content Requirements and System Design for Officer Career Counseling (OCC), which has now become the Career Progression Systems Work Unit with a broader mission.

As a first step in this research, ARI personnel designed a survey questionnaire to measure officers' expressions of their career counseling needs, career information needs, and preferences for counseling system

¹ Franklin, D. L., Braybrook, W. M., Farber, A., Crawshaw, J. L., Stein, D. P., and Blair, J. F. Career motivation of Army personnel--junior officer's duties. Technical Report 1-212, Franklin Institute Research Laboratories, September 1968.

² U.S. Army War College. Leadership for the 1970's. Carlisle Barracks, Penna.: U.S. Army War College, 20 October 1971.

³ The Officer Efficiency Reporting System--OERS. OERS Study Group, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel-CSD, 25 June 1969.

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features, in order to plan the research program. Because the purpose of the questionnaire was to suggest hypotheses, not to confirm them, elaborate statistical analysis of the items was neither planned nor performed. A preliminary questionnaire was administered at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where a small sample of officers was also interviewed. The final version was given to a cross section of officers at each of four installations, in conjunction with both group and individual interviews, and provided current, first-hand information on the problem. Findings were used in planning an experimental computer-aided career counseling system, a laboratory facility to be used for research on career guidance systems and features of these systems at ARI, in the field, and at the Career Branches in the Officer Personnel Directorate (OPD), now titled the Officer Personnel Management Directorate and at the time of the survey titled the Office of Personnel Operation (OPO).

METHOD

SAMPLE

The final questionnaire was given at Fort Hood, Texas, Fort Meade, Maryland, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, and Fort Jackson, South Carolina, to a total sample of 615 officers in January-March 1972.⁴ Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample by grade, by branch, by component, and by installation. Installations were carefully selected to provide a cross section of grades, branches, and types of assignments. Fifty percent of the sample was from the combat arms, and a good representation was obtained across branches and grades.

Following administration of the questionnaires, ARI personnel interviewed the officers to obtain opinions and information not elicited in the written material. Most of the officers were interviewed in groups of 30 which were homogeneous as to grade. A smaller number were interviewed individually at each installation to provide further opportunity for free expressions of attitudes and for validation of the written data. Names of officers were not recorded, and participants were assured that their answers would be anonymous.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part I, General Information, requested personal background data on the officer, his experiences in the Army (particularly with relation to career guidance), and his attitudes about Army career counseling. Part II, Proposed Counseling Systems, described four hypothetical alternative systems for providing career information and career guidance to Army officers

⁴ Because a few officers failed to answer every item, the total number of respondents is not 615 for every question.

Table 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICER SAMPLE
(N = 615)

| Characteristic | Category | Number |
|----------------|------------------------|------------|
| Grade | 2LT | 97 |
| | 1LT | 195 |
| | Capt. | 167 |
| | Maj. | 103 |
| | LTC | 46 |
| | Col. | 1 |
| | Not indicated | 6 |
| | | <u>615</u> |
| Branch | Infantry | 134 |
| | Armor | 98 |
| | Air Defense | 9 |
| | Field Artillery | 63 |
| | Engineer | 90 |
| | Signal | 30 |
| | Chemical | 5 |
| | Quartermaster | 16 |
| | Ordnance | 19 |
| | Transportation | 20 |
| | Adjutant General | 22 |
| | Military Police | 23 |
| | Finance | 4 |
| | Military Intelligence | 17 |
| | Women's Army Corps | 19 |
| | Army Nurse Corps | 4 |
| | Dental Corps | 3 |
| | Medical Corps | 1 |
| | Medical Service Corps | 17 |
| | Judge Advocate General | 6 |
| | Chaplains | 14 |
| | Other | 1 |
| | | <u>615</u> |
| Component | RA | 194 |
| | Res | 413 |
| | Other | 6 |
| | Not indicated | 2 |
| | | <u>615</u> |
| Installation | Fort Hood | 240 |
| | Fort Meade | 135 |
| | Fort Belvoir | 105 |
| | Fort Jackson | 135 |
| | | <u>615</u> |

and requested reactions to each proposal, in order to elicit opinions and attitudes on different ways of providing career guidance. Part III, Characteristics of Career Guidance Systems, requested evaluations of specific characteristics of possible guidance systems. The actual questionnaire is given in Appendix A as the vehicle for presenting summary statistics.

The questionnaire also sought information on user acceptability of computer-aided technology in a career information and planning system.

RESULTS

Results are presented in several ways. Those which bear most directly on the design of an Army career progression system are discussed in the text. Percentages or means for the total group for each item of the questionnaire appear in Appendix A. The actual questionnaire is used as the vehicle for these statistics. In Appendix B these data are broken out separately for company and field grade officers, and also according to the career intentions of the officers (expressed as "career," "undecided," or "leave" on the basis of responses to Question 17: "What are your plans for making the Army a career for twenty or more years?"). The data were also analyzed by combat versus technical specialty and by post location, but as no significant differences appeared, these analyses are not discussed in this report. Appendix C contains a compilation of free responses, either to the open-ended questions or during the interviews that followed, which have been culled and grouped by type of content to identify problem areas for research planning.

The results presented in the text may be compared with the results in the appendixes for better understanding of the characteristics of the total group and the subgroups. For example, percentages in Table 3 of the text may be compared with percentages for item 16 in Table B-1 of Appendix B, and means in Table 12 of the text may be compared with means for items 170-174 in Table B-1. Slight discrepancies in sums of means and percentages from various sections of the report are the result of roundoff and the varying numbers of officers who answered each item. Such discrepancies do not change the interpretation of the results. For a sample of this size, all differences between pairs of means greater than .2 are statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level.⁵

⁵ In Appendix B the t test was used to compare means when the group was divided into company and field grade subgroups. Dunn's test (or the Bonferroni t test) was used for paired comparisons between means when the group had been divided into three subgroups according to career intentions. The large number of items involved in the questionnaire make comparisons between individual pairs of means difficult to interpret. Many statistically significant differences may not represent meaningful differences or may be chance.

For purposes of analysis, the scales for certain items have been inverted from the format of the actual questionnaire so that the magnitude of the mean values reported is consistent with the magnitude of the dimensions assessed.

OFFICER ATTITUDES AND OPINIONS

Part I of the questionnaire was concerned with officer attitudes regarding the areas of (1) career satisfaction, (2) satisfaction with branch, (3) assignment information, (4) influences on assignment preferences, (5) contact with career branch, and (6) adequacy of information about career decisions.

Career satisfaction. A direct measure of career satisfaction is whether or not individuals want to remain in their jobs. Consequently, the officers were asked about their present plans for making the Army a career. Of the total group, 55% indicated that they either definitely or probably would seek a career in the Army. Only 32% responded that they either probably or definitely would not seek a career in the Army. The remaining 13% were undecided. Not surprisingly, the data show a trend for the percentage of careerists to increase with grade (Table 2).

Table 2

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION "WHAT ARE YOUR PRESENT PLANS FOR MAKING THE ARMY A CAREER FOR TWENTY OR MORE YEARS?"

| Choice | No. Company Grade | No. Field Grade | Total No. Officers | Total % Officers |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Definitely will seek a career in the Army | 111 | 128 | 239 | 39 |
| Probably will seek a career in the Army | 83 | 16 | 99 | 16 |
| Undecided about a career in the Army | 76 | 3 | 79 | 13 |
| Probably will not seek a career in the Army | 76 | 2 | 78 | 13 |
| Definitely will not seek a career in the Army | 117 | 1 | 118 | 19 |
| No Response | 2 | 0 | 2 | -- |
| Total | 465 | 150 | 615 | 100 |

Another question relating to career satisfaction was: "If you were given more voice in decisions which affect your Army career, what effect would this have on your decision to remain in the Army?" Predictably, officers indicated that more voice in career decisions would influence them to stay. However, one-third of the LTC sample said that this would not affect their decisions (Table 3).

Table 3

RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION "IF YOU WERE GIVEN MORE VOICE IN DECISIONS WHICH AFFECT YOUR ARMY CAREER WHAT EFFECT WOULD THIS HAVE ON YOUR DECISION TO REMAIN IN THE ARMY?"

| Choice | % Grade of Responding | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 2LT | 1LT | CPT | MAJ | LTC |
| Strong influence to stay | 45 | 47 | 60 | 60 | 48 |
| Slight influence to stay | 35 | 34 | 23 | 26 | 19 |
| No effect | 20 | 19 | 17 | 14 | 33 |
| | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

For many officers the development of a career pattern may contribute to their decision to make a career in the Army. For example, among the sample of those who intend to stay in the Army 74% indicated that they saw a career pattern evolving for them, whereas only 42% of the undecided and 26% of the officers leaving indicated that they could detect a pattern (Appendix B, question 28, choices 1 and 2).

Satisfaction with branch. The questionnaire results, in general, indicate that officers are satisfied with their current career branches (Appendix A, question 18). Branch assignment is probably not a significant factor in officer attrition. However, officers with definite plans to make the Army a career are more satisfied with their branches than are officers who have decided against or are undecided about an Army career (Appendix B, question 18).

Assignment information. To determine whether officers felt that the assignment system served them effectively, they were asked: "How often are you getting the assignments from your branch which you need for your Army career development?" Most of those who found the question applicable felt that they always or usually got such assignments. However, one in five felt that they seldom or never got the assignments needed (Appendix A, question 23). In particular, company grade officers and officers with uncertain career plans felt that they were getting the necessary assignments less often from their branch (Appendix B, question 23). Of course, without adequate information about career patterns, officers may not know whether they are getting the assignments they need for career development.

When asked about the Preference Form (DA Form 483), the officers said they felt that preferences have a moderate influence at best in determining assignments (Appendix A, question 21) but should have a much greater influence (Appendix A, question 22). This discrepancy can be expected to contribute to feelings of career dissatisfaction. When the group is divided by grade, this discrepancy is greater for company grade than for field grade officers. Similarly, the difference is greater for officers without firm career plans than for careerists (Appendix B, questions 21-22).

Officers most frequently found out about available assignments by directly contacting their branch. The commanding officer was also a frequent source of this information, while senior and fellow officers were less frequent sources (Appendix A, questions 46-52). A comparison of the subgroup responses (Appendix B, question 46-52) shows that company grade officers were more likely to ask advice of peers than were field grade officers, who tended to consult with more official sources (branch and commanding officer). Likewise, career officers more frequently consulted the official sources than did the undecided and departing officers. An officer career guidance system which is responsive and up to date might correct many of the undesirable aspects of these ad hoc methods, especially for the undecided and departing officers.

Influences on assignment preferences. To determine what factors influence assignment preferences of officers, the group was asked to rate each of a set of likely factors according to the following scale:

- 4 = major influence
- 3 = moderate influence
- 2 = little influence
- 1 = no influence

In Table 4 the evaluated factors are arranged by their degree of influence, based on their mean ratings by the entire group (from Appendix A, questions 53-64). The emphasis the officers placed on interesting work and using their education and skills points out the potential value of computerized procedures which can match men to jobs on the basis of a number of variables which include their interests and background skills (Table 4).

Table 4

DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OF VARIOUS FACTORS ON ASSIGNMENT PREFERENCES

| Factor | Degree of Influence ^a |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Interesting work | Major |
| Utilization of present education and skills | Major |
| Increase in advancement possibilities | Major |
| Geographical location | Moderate to major |
| Personal or family needs | Moderate to major |
| Chance to get more civilian education | Moderate to major |
| Chance to acquire skills useful after leaving the Army | Moderate |
| Recreational facilities available | Moderate |
| Chance to work under a specific commander or senior officer | Little to moderate |
| Contact with higher ranking officers | Little |
| Pressure from senior officers | Little |

^a The labels are meant to convey a general impression of the results in terms of the rating scale used.

Source of career guidance. To identify the usefulness of sources of Army career guidance, the officers were asked to judge the usefulness of a set of possible sources of information according to the following scale:

- 4 = extremely useful
- 3 = moderately useful
- 2 = not very useful
- 1 = not at all useful
- 0 = never used

The responses of the total group identified the two categories in Table 5, which presents sources of information in the rank order of their usefulness (from Appendix A, questions 71-89). Note that the data indicate that there are no "extremely useful" sources of career guidance information.

Table 5

PERCEIVED USEFULNESS OF SOURCES OF CAREER GUIDANCE

| Perceived Usefulness | Source |
|----------------------|--|
| Moderately Useful | Career Branch Manager Fellow officer of higher grade Commanding officer |
| Not very useful | Advanced Branch course information Branch Newsletter DA Pamphlet 600-3 Branch basic course presentation Fellow officers of same grade OCS, ROTC, USMA presentation Army Times Military professional journals Field Personnel Officer Army Regulations Branch School Newsletter Army Personnel Letter Senior enlisted men Army Information Digest Soldiers Friends and Relatives |

There is some indication that personal contact with fellow officers and commanding officers comprises a large part of the career guidance information sources for this group. These sources may be inadequate in terms of obsolete information, perpetuated misconceptions, or individual differences in capacity for informal counseling.

Contact with career branch. A source of dissatisfaction frequently found in Army studies is the inaccessibility of assignment officers in the career branch, due to their heavy work load. To get information about this problem, the group was asked how often they used any of several indicated methods of contacting their branch (other than mailing in preference forms). As Table 6 shows, each officer, on the average, had telephoned his branch twice, visited once, and written once. Since the sample has a preponderance of junior officers and the scale does not specify more than three contacts, these data may be conservative. For the career branch assignment officers, these contacts represent a considerable workload, one which might be alleviated by an improved career information system. On the other hand, the reported frequency of contacts may be too low for adequate career counseling. For example, officers who intended to stay in the Army contacted the career branch significantly more often than officers who were uncertain about or had no intention of staying in (Appendix B, questions 65-70).

Table 6

MEAN NUMBER OF TIMES DIFFERENT METHODS
WERE USED TO CONTACT THE CAREER BRANCH

| Method of Contact | Approximate Average: Number of Times Used by each Officer |
|---|---|
| Telephoned | 2 contacts |
| Visited | 1 contact |
| Wrote | 1 contact |
| Senior Officer telephoned in behalf of counselee | 1/2 contact |
| Senior Officer wrote in behalf of counselee | 0 |
| Other | 1/2 contact |

Adequacy of information about career decisions. Because officers' careers involve numerous important decisions, the group was asked to rate the adequacy of their information for participating in each decision. The following numerical scale was used:

- 4 = very adequate
- 3 = moderately adequate
- 2 = moderately inadequate
- 1 = very inadequate
- 0 = does not apply

Table 7 shows that the group felt the available information was inadequate for many important career decisions, particularly for decisions about assignments (Appendix A, questions 90-99). The effect was again most pronounced for company grade and undecided subgroups (Appendix B, questions 90-99).

Table 7

PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF THE INFORMATION USED TO MAKE CAREER DECISIONS

| Rating on Adequacy of Available Information | Type of Career Decision |
|--|--|
| Adequate | Applying for Voluntary Indefinite |
| | Applying for RA |
| Moderately Adequate | Requesting Initial Branch selection |
| | Requesting Job-related technical training |
| | Requesting Graduate education |
| Inadequate | Making choices for recent assignment preference forms |
| | Requesting specific command assignments |
| | Requesting specific staff assignments |
| | Requesting Branch change |
| | Requesting Special career field |

REACTIONS TO PROPOSED COUNSELING SYSTEMS

Part II of the questionnaire consisted of brief descriptions of four alternative career counseling systems for officers: computerized counseling, OPD counselors on post, OPD counselors in Washington, D.C., and professional counselors on post. Each description identified the counselors and the functions they would perform; the officers were then asked several questions about the system (Appendix A, questions 100-159).

The questions fell into two categories: the first was a set of open-ended items designed to elicit opinions about desirable system features; the second set asked the officers to rate the proposed system's usefulness for specific decisions and to indicate how satisfactory they felt it would be as an operational system. To eliminate any influence of the order of presentation, four versions of the questionnaire with the descriptions in different sequences were administered. Responses to the first set of open-ended questions have been incorporated into Appendix C. The group responses to the second set of evaluative questions are discussed here.

Table 8 shows the group ratings of how helpful the examinees felt the proposed systems would be for making the specific decisions indicated, using the following scale:

- 4 = very helpful
- 3 = moderately helpful
- 2 = not very helpful
- 1 = not at all helpful

Consistently, the higher ratings were given to counseling systems which include a counselor on post and a relatively low usefulness was anticipated for the computerized system. As a group, the officers seemed to want an available counselor and would prefer one with professional training. The negative attitude of the officers to a computerized system was probably influenced by lack of familiarity with on-line systems like the one described in the questionnaire. Paradoxically, such a system is probably the only feasible way of delivering some of the most desirable features of any counseling system (e.g., ready availability on post, current and complete information from one source, and knowledgeable career advice). Other designers of computerized career counseling systems have reported that users change from negative to highly positive attitudes after experience with the system.⁶

After evaluating the usefulness of each system for specific career decisions, officers were asked to indicate how satisfactory they would find that system, using the following scale to rate overall satisfaction:

- 4 = very satisfactory
- 3 = satisfactory
- 2 = unsatisfactory
- 1 = very unsatisfactory

The mean ratings are presented by grade and for the total group in Table 9. Significant differences appear between field and company grade officers in their ratings of OPD counselors in D.C. and professional counselors on post. In contrast to company grade officers, field grade officers indicated that they found OPD counselors satisfactory (Table 9 and Appendix B, questions 100-159). Field grade officers also had reservations about professional counselors on post, while junior officers gave this alternative the highest rating. When samples with different career intentions were compared (Table 10), it was apparent that all groups favored any alternatives to the present system other than a computerized system. However, officers who did not have definite Army career intentions were clearly less favorable than careerists to a system with OPD counselors in D.C. and were more in favor of professional counselors on post.

⁶ Super, D. E. Computers and counselor roles. In D. E. Super, Computer-assisted counseling. New York: Columbia University Teachers College, 1970.

Table 8
MEAN VALUES OF THE USEFULNESS OF ALTERNATIVE CAREER COUNSELING
SYSTEMS FOR MAKING SPECIFIC CAREER DECISIONS

| Career Decision | Alternative System | | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Computerized Counseling | OPD Counselors on Post | OPD Counselors in D.C. | Professional Counselor on Post |
| Applying for Voluntary Indefinite | 2.7 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.3 |
| Applying for Regular Army | 2.7 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.3 |
| Selecting branch | 2.5 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 3.0 |
| Selecting graduate education | 2.6 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.3 |
| Selecting special career field | 2.7 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 3.3 |
| Selecting job-related technical training | 2.6 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 3.2 |
| Making choices for assignment preference form | 2.9 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 3.3 |
| Deciding whether or not to make a career of Army | 2.0 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 2.9 |

Table 9

MEAN RATINGS OF SATISFACTION WITH ALTERNATIVE COUNSELING SYSTEMS, BY GRADE

| Grade | Alternative Systems | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Computerized Counseling | OPD Counselors on Post | OPD Counselors in D.C. | Professional Counselors on Post |
| 2LT | 2.2 | 3.2 | 2.7 | 3.4 |
| 1LT | 2.4 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 3.3 |
| CPT | 2.3 | 3.0 | 2.7 | 3.3 |
| MAJ | 2.2 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 2.8 |
| LTC | 2.0 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 2.6 |
| Average for Total Sample | 2.3 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 3.2 |

Table 10

MEAN RATINGS OF SATISFACTION WITH ALTERNATIVE COUNSELING SYSTEMS, BY CAREER INTENTION

| Career Intentions | Alternative Systems | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | Computerized Counseling | OPD Counselors on Post | OPD Counselors in D.C. | Professional Counselors on Post |
| Career | 2.2 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 3.1 |
| Undecided | 2.4 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.4 |
| Leave | 2.2 | 3.0 | 2.6 | 3.3 |
| Average for Total Sample | 2.3 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 3.2 |

REACTIONS TO CHARACTERISTICS OF POSSIBLE CAREER GUIDANCE SYSTEMS

Part III of the questionnaire requested reactions to specific characteristics of possible career guidance systems, including methods of being assigned, methods of influencing assignments, methods of interacting with a career guidance/information system, types of counselor preferred, and types of useful information.

Methods of being assigned. In order to elicit more comparable responses than would be produced if respondees were allowed to propose unique assignment methods, reactions were restricted to four specific alternatives for making assignments. The mean of the group's rank-ordering of these alternatives (Appendix A, questions 160-163) indicates that officers did not feel strongly about whether an experienced branch officer (alternative 161) or a computer (alternative 162) assigned them, if rules known to the officer were used, and if the computer assignment was reviewed by experienced branch personnel. Either alternative was significantly preferred to the present system (alternative 160) in which experienced branch personnel use rules not fully spelled out to the officer as a basis for making assignments.

The factor which officers seemed to want most in an improved career guidance system was knowledge of the rules that determine who gets which assignment. Although reservations about a computerized system were indicated by the low ranking for assignment by computer only (alternative 163), inclusion of a human element seemed to ameliorate this attitude.

Methods of influencing assignments. The officer group was asked to rank three possible ways of influencing their assignments. The mean rankings (Appendix A, questions 164-166) indicated that officers wanted to provide specific assignment preferences themselves and have these preferences reviewed and acted upon by experienced personnel.

Types of counselor preferred. Several sets of questions in Part III requested the officers to evaluate several types of personnel as potential sources of career guidance in specified situations, using the following scale:

- 4 = excellent
- 3 = good
- 2 = fair
- 1 = poor

The group was first asked to evaluate the counselors with regard to how good they thought each would be in helping them plan their next assignments. The results in Table 11 reveal two trends: (1) Ratings of the OPD assignments officer became more favorable with increasing grade, while ratings of the professional career counselor independent of OPD became less favorable; (2) the nonprofessional career counselor independent of OPD was clearly the least desirable alternative.

Table 11

MEAN RATINGS OF TYPES OF CAREER COUNSELORS
FOR PLANNING NEXT ASSIGNMENT, BY GRADE

| Type of Counselor | Grade | | | | |
|--|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 2LT | 1LT | CPT | MAJ | LTC |
| Commanding Officer | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 2.4 |
| OPD Assignment Officer | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 3.0 |
| OPD Career Counselor | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.8 |
| Non-Professional Career Counselor, Independent of OPD | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.1 |
| Professional Career Counselor, Independent of OPD | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 2.5 |

Another question asked how good each of several types of counselors would be in helping officers plan an assignment sequence. Responses to this question (Table 12) show trends similar to those in Table 11. Company grade officers indicated that they felt that a professional career counselor independent of OPD would be the most helpful alternative in planning a long-range assignment sequence, while field grade officers have more confidence in OPD personnel than their juniors.

Why should there be this apparent difference between field and company grade officers in their confidence in OPD personnel? The field grade officers may have learned through experience that the OPD personnel do a good job in assigning them, or it may be primarily the officers who had this attitude early in their careers are those who succeeded in the Army. Did those officers who voluntarily left the service do so in part because they actually were poorly assigned, or merely because they felt they were poorly assigned because they lacked information about the assignment system? The quality of performance may also enter in; those officers with high OERs may have been given more attention by OPD, received good assignments, and remained in the Army to achieve the higher grades.

Table 12

MEAN RATINGS OF TYPES OF CAREER COUNSELOR FOR
PLANNING AN ASSIGNMENT SEQUENCE, BY GRADE

| Type of Counselor | Grade | | | | |
|--|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | 2LT | 1LT | CPT | MAJ | LTC |
| Commanding Officer | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.1 |
| OPD Assignment Officer | 2.5 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| OPD Career Counselor | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 3.0 |
| Non-Professional Career Counselor, Independent of OPD | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| Professional Career Counselor, Independent of OPD | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.7 |

Types of information. The final set of questions in Part III was designed to evaluate specific questions within categories of information that could be put into or made available from a career guidance system. The officers were asked to indicate how useful (or valuable) they felt each type of information was, according to the scale below:

- 4 = of GREAT value, DEFINITELY INCLUDE in system
- 3 = of MODERATE value, INCLUDE in system
- 2 = of SOME value, POSSIBLY INCLUDE in system
- 1 = of NO value, DO NOT INCLUDE in system

The group first evaluated types of general information (Appendix A, questions 185-188). From the high scores assigned to these items, officers are very concerned about keeping their personal career information and assignment preferences up to date. A computerized system which should assure that this information is maintained would certainly be favorably regarded by these officers.

The next category included information related to career planning. The officers evaluated the items using the scale described above (Appendix A, questions 190-199). These data indicate that educational information, particularly career-enhancing educational information, was valued most highly, even more than information on an officer's relative standing among his peers (question 188). An optimistic interpretation is that these data reflect a healthy attitude, i.e., "I'll try to improve myself as much as possible, regardless of how much ahead or behind the field I am right now."

Types of information about specific assignments were evaluated on the same scale (Appendix A, questions 200-210). The most valued items pertained to how well an officer's qualifications fit the job and how much the job would enhance his career. A trained counselor could provide useful input and guidance on both these factors.

Others assigned great value to information regarding their own promotion to higher rank, as indicated by the responses to questions 211-217 (Appendix A). The entire list of types of information about eligibility for and probability of promotion received high ratings, indicating that officers wanted all this information available in an improved counseling system. A possible interpretation of the uniformly high mean values assigned to these items is that they reflect the same factor that operates with the assignment process, i.e., wanting to understand the factors which influence one's career. A restricted range of choices might be far more acceptable if the policies or logic underlying the restrictions were understood.

FREE-RESPONSE COMMENTS

The free responses compiled in Appendix C, made either to the open-ended questions or during the interviews which followed, were culled, grouped by type of content, and quoted exactly wherever possible. Because the purpose was to identify problem areas for research planning, the situation in which the responses were elicited predisposed officers to express criticism rather than praise; these items were included in this report because several senior officers had expressed keen interest in the candid expression of officer attitudes toward career guidance and assignment. Caution should be exercised in interpreting these comments, as no data were obtained on their generality or exhaustiveness, and many officers did not volunteer comments at all. Readers are urged not to overreact to these comments nor to overgeneralize from them with regard to either the population of Army officers or the problem areas of career counseling and assignment.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The data obtained from the questionnaires are generally consistent with the findings of early Army studies. Officers had some criticism of the current career counseling/assignment system; they felt that adequate information was not readily available when they made decisions at critical points in their careers. Officers indicated that they would like to have input from trained and knowledgeable counselors when making specific assignment preference decisions and career plans.

The questionnaire also examined what officers want in an improved assignment and counseling system. The group agreed that they want most an interesting job which offers good advancement possibilities.

Other important factors for assignments were personal or family needs, geographical location, and opportunities for civilian education. A system which provides better information on these factors and a list of realistic assignment options would make officer preference statements more meaningful.

A point which recurred during the interviews is the negative effect of lack of information. Not understanding the policies governing assignments, promotions, or the development of a desirable career pattern, an officer may interpret much of what he experiences as arbitrary or irrational.

These responses of a cross section of Army officers encourage exploring the use of computer-aided systems for satisfying officers' career information and counseling needs. It is not realistic to consider providing a human counselor who can always be completely informed and available to every officer who needs guidance or information. On the other hand, human counselors should be retained in the system to provide the judgment and experience which cannot be imparted to a computer. A computer-aided system with complementary machine and human counseling resources could provide readily available up-to-date resources and allow the counselor time to perform those functions which cannot be relegated to a computer. One of the goals of the experimental computer-aided career-counseling facility being developed at ARI is to work out the optimal mix of human and machine elements of an improved career progression information system.

APPENDIXES

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APPENDIX A RESPONSES OF TOTAL SAMPLE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix A reproduces the survey questionnaire as a vehicle for summarizing the specific responses of the total officer sample. For questions 6-9, 12-52, 113, 128, 143, and 158, the numbers recorded in the answer position represent the percentage of the total sample (N = 615) who responded to that alternative. For items 10-11 the mean number of years is shown. For questions 53-99, 105-112, 120-127, 135-142, 150-157, and 160-217 the numbers represent means of rated ordinal responses. Items 1-5 provide administrative data, and questions 100-104, 114-119, 129-134, 144-149, and 159 request free-response comments which are presented in Appendix C. Because some officers did not answer every item, the total number of respondents is not 615 for every question, but the response failures represent only a negligible proportion of the sample. Where means are used, the number identifying non-ordinal response alternatives such as "does not apply," "no opinion," "don't know" is not included in the calculation. At the time of the survey, the Officer Personnel Operations (OPO) provided career guidance. OPO later became the Officer Personnel Directorate (OPD) in the Army Military Personnel Center (MILPERCEN) and is now known as the Officer Personnel Management Directorate in MILPERCEN.

GENERAL INFORMATION
for Officers Participating in Research to
Improve Officer Career Guidance

1. The research objective

The Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) is conducting research on career counseling and guidance for officers in order to improve the current system.

2. Your part in this research

You are among an initial group of officers selected to represent a cross section of grades, branches, and assignments. You are being asked to help us identify the most important problems and to provide a basis for formulation of a research approach which will, in the long run, produce the most meaningful results for you, for other officers, and for the Army. Your frank, thoughtful replies will be highly valuable for research planning. Your answers will be used to develop a questionnaire to be distributed to officers Army-wide. Ultimately, important improvements in officer career guidance will result.

3. Confidentiality of your answers

Your specific responses will be known only to ARI research scientists, and there will be no attempt to connect you or your unit with your answers. In this way, we hope you will feel free to give completely frank answers. This questionnaire is anonymous. Do not sign your name.

4. Ignore the numbering system. Questions are numbered for keypunching convenience only.

5. Read and respond to the items rapidly. Give your first impressions without pondering over the alternatives. Do not hesitate to write down additional comments that occur to you and to make any suggestions about the project as a whole.

6. Thank you for your assistance.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

For each of questions 6 through 29 place a check (✓) in the blank beside the correct (or the best) answer.

6. What is your current grade?

- | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------------|
| | <u> </u> % | |
| 1 | <u>16</u> | Second Lieutenant |
| 2 | <u>32</u> | First Lieutenant |
| 3 | <u>28</u> | Captain |
| 4 | <u>16</u> | Major |
| 5 | <u>8</u> | Lieutenant Colonel |
| 6 | <u>0</u> | Colonel |

7-8. What is your career branch?

- | | | |
|----|-------------|------------------------|
| | <u> </u> % | |
| 1 | <u>22</u> | Infantry |
| 2 | <u>16</u> | Armor |
| 3 | <u>1</u> | Air Defense |
| 4 | <u>10</u> | Field Artillery |
| 5 | <u>15</u> | Engineer |
| 6 | <u>5</u> | Signal |
| 7 | <u>1</u> | Chemical |
| 8 | <u>3</u> | Quartermaster |
| 9 | <u>3</u> | Ordnance |
| 10 | <u>3</u> | Transportation |
| 11 | <u>4</u> | Adjutant General |
| 12 | <u>4</u> | Military Police |
| 13 | <u>1</u> | Finance |
| 14 | <u>3</u> | Military Intelligence |
| 15 | <u>3</u> | Women's Army Corps |
| 16 | <u>1</u> | Army Nurse Corps |
| 17 | <u>1</u> | Dental Corps |
| 18 | <u>0</u> | Medical Corps |
| 19 | <u>3</u> | Medical Service Corps |
| 20 | <u>0</u> | Veterinary Corps |
| 21 | <u>1</u> | Judge Advocate General |
| 22 | <u>2</u> | Chaplains |

9. What is your component?

- | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------------|
| | <u> </u> % | |
| 1 | <u>31</u> | Regular Army |
| 2 | <u>68</u> | Reserve |
| 3 | <u>1</u> | Other: Specify _____ |

10-11. How many full years of active federal commissioned service have you completed?

4.7 years

12. Are you serving in other than your first obligated tour?

%

1 13 Does not apply

2 43 Yes

3 5 No, but I plan to extend

4 39 No

13. Have you ever received an accelerated promotion?

%

1 7 Yes

2 93 No

14. Have you ever been passed over for a promotion?

%

1 4 Yes

2 96 No

15. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

%

1 - Did not complete high school

2 3 Completed high school

3 16 Attended college, but did not receive degree

4 61 Received college degree (B.S., B.A., or equivalent)

5 7 Attended graduate school but did not receive graduate degree

6 10 Received Master's degree (M.S., M.A., or equivalent)

7 2 Received Doctor's degree (Ph.D., M.D., J.D., or equivalent)

16. If you were given more voice in decisions which affect your Army career, what effect would this have on your decision to remain in the Army?

%

1 52 Strong influence to stay

2 28 Slight influence to stay

3 19 No effect

17. What are your present plans for making the Army a career for twenty or more years?

%

1 39 Definitely will seek a career in the Army

2 16 Probably will seek a career in the Army

3 13 Undecided about a career in the Army

4 13 Probably will not seek a career in the Army

5 19 Definitely will not seek a career in the Army

Although the following questions are directed toward those planning to make a career in the Army, answers are requested from every officer. If you are planning to leave the Army, answer the following questions AS IF YOU WERE PLANNING A CAREER IN THE ARMY, that is, as if you were planning to stay in the Army for 20 to 30 years.

18. How satisfied are you with your current career branch?

| | | |
|---|-----------|-------------------------|
| | % | |
| 1 | <u>40</u> | Very satisfied |
| 2 | <u>39</u> | Moderately satisfied |
| 3 | <u>11</u> | Moderately dissatisfied |
| 4 | <u>7</u> | Very dissatisfied |
| 5 | <u>3</u> | No opinion |

19. In making your initial branch choice, were you allowed to put as your first choice any branch you preferred?

| | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| | % | |
| 1 | <u>73</u> | Yes |
| 2 | <u>7</u> | Yes, but I was strongly advised to select a specific one |
| 3 | <u>19</u> | No |

20. Were you originally assigned to the branch that you indicated in writing as being your first choice?

| | | |
|---|-----------|-----|
| | % | |
| 1 | <u>63</u> | Yes |
| 2 | <u>37</u> | No |

21. How much influence do you think your Preference Form has in determining your assignments?

| | | |
|---|-----------|--------------------|
| | % | |
| 1 | <u>8</u> | Great influence |
| 2 | <u>36</u> | Moderate influence |
| 3 | <u>37</u> | Small influence |
| 4 | <u>14</u> | No influence |
| 5 | <u>5</u> | Don't know |

22. How much influence do you think your Preference Form should have in determining your assignments?

| | | |
|---|-----------|--------------------|
| | % | |
| 1 | <u>53</u> | Great influence |
| 2 | <u>46</u> | Moderate influence |
| 3 | <u>1</u> | Small influence |
| 4 | <u>0</u> | No influence |
| 5 | <u>1</u> | Don't know |

23. How often are you getting the assignments from your branch which you need for your Army career development?
- %
- 1 12 Always
 - 2 35 Usually
 - 3 13 Half the time
 - 4 12 Seldom
 - 5 4 Never
 - 6 24 Does not apply
24. How free do you feel to talk to your commanders about changing an assignment?
- %
- 1 40 Very free
 - 2 36 Moderately free
 - 3 17 Moderately unfree
 - 4 7 Very unfree
25. How successful have you been in dealing with your commanders about changing an assignment?
- %
- 1 20 Very successful
 - 2 28 Moderately successful
 - 3 11 Moderately unsuccessful
 - 4 10 Very unsuccessful
 - 5 32 Haven't tried
26. How free do you feel about contacting your branch about changing an assignment?
- %
- 1 47 Very free
 - 2 34 Moderately free
 - 3 14 Moderately unfree
 - 4 6 Very unfree
27. How successful have you been in dealing with your branch about changing an assignment?
- %
- 1 19 Very successful
 - 2 17 Moderately successful
 - 3 9 Moderately unsuccessful
 - 4 13 Very unsuccessful
 - 5 43 Haven't tried

28. Thus far have you been able to see an Army career-building pattern evolving for you?

2

- 1 17 Yes, there is a clear pattern
- 2 37 Yes, there is a vague pattern
- 3 18 No, there is no pattern
- 4 17 I can't tell if there is a pattern
- 5 11 Does not apply

29. How satisfied are you with your Army career development?

2

- 1 13 Very satisfied
- 2 44 Moderately satisfied
- 3 19 Moderately dissatisfied
- 4 9 Very dissatisfied
- 5 16 No opinion

Questions 30 through 38 are factors which could influence you to select a particular career branch. Place a check (✓) in the blank beside each factor that led you to make your first choice of branch as recorded in your initial branch selection. Check as many as apply.

2

- 30. 41 Previous formal education
- 31. 25 Work experience (non-military)
- 32. 18 Previous military experience (other than ROTC, OCS, or USMA)
- 33. 39 ROTC, OCS, or USMA training
- 34. 77 My personal preference
- 35. 15 Army needs at the time
- 36. 26 Advice from senior officers
- 37. 4 Pressure from military superiors
- 38. 18 Others: Specify _____

Questions 39 through 45 are possible reasons for changing branch. If you plan to change or have changed branch, place a check (✓) in the blank beside each of your reasons for changing branch. Check as many as apply. If you have not changed or do not plan to change branch, check Does Not Apply.

39. 19 Opportunities to use my education and skills better in new branch
40. 7 Work uninteresting in old branch
41. 6 Past assignments more appropriate for new branch
42. 8 Army career opportunities limited in old branch
43. 1 Pressure from military superiors
44. 7 Others: Specify _____
45. 71 Does not apply

Questions 46 through 52 are possible methods of finding available assignments. Place a check (✓) in the blank beside each method which you have used. Check as many as apply.

46. 69 Contacting my branch
47. 48 Talking with my commanding officer
48. 40 Talking with senior officers in my unit
49. 29 Talking with senior officers in other units
50. 43 Talking with fellow officers in my unit
51. 38 Talking with fellow officers in other units
52. 9 Others: Specify _____

Questions 53 through 64 are factors that could influence your assignment preferences. Select the number on the scale below that shows how much influence each factor has on your assignment preferences, and write the number in the blank beside the factor. Mark each question.

- 4 = Major influence
- 3 = Moderate influence
- 2 = Little influence
- 1 = No influence

Mean

- 53. 3.3 Geographical location
- 54. 2.1 Chance to work under a specific commander or senior officer
- 55. 1.9 Contact with higher ranking officers
- 56. 3.2 Personal or family needs
- 57. 2.4 Recreational facilities
- 58. 2.7 Chance to acquire skills useful after leaving the Army
- 59. 3.3 Increase in advancement possibilities
- 60. 3.4 Utilization of present education or skills
- 61. 3.1 Chance to get more civilian education
- 62. 1.4 Pressure from senior officers
- 63. 3.6 Interesting work
- 64. 2.5 Other factors: Specify _____

Questions 65 through 70 are possible methods of contacting your career branch in Washington, D.C. Select the number on the scale below that shows how often you have used each method to contact your branch, and write the number in the blank beside the method. (Do not include mailing your preference forms.) Mark each question.

- 4 = Never
- 3 = Once
- 2 = Twice
- 1 = Three or more times

Mean

- 65. 3.0 I visited
- 66. 2.0 I telephoned
- 67. 3.4 A senior officer telephoned for me
- 68. 3.0 I wrote
- 69. 3.8 A senior officer wrote for me
- 70. 3.5 Others: Specify _____

Questions 71 through 89 are possible sources of Army career guidance or information. Select the number on the scale below that shows the usefulness of each source, and write the number in the blank beside that source. Mark each source.

- 4 = Extremely useful
- 3 = Moderately useful
- 2 = Not very useful
- 1 = Not at all useful
- 0 = Haven't used this source

Mean

- 71. 3.1 Your commanding officer
- 72. 3.1 Fellow officers of higher grade
- 73. 2.6 Fellow officers of my grade
- 74. 3.1 Career branch managers
- 75. 2.4 Field personnel officers
- 76. 2.2 Senior enlisted men
- 77. 2.4 Army Regulations
- 78. 2.6 DA Pamphlet 600-3, "Career Planning for Army Officers"
- 79. 1.9 Friends and relatives (non-military)
- 80. 2.3 Army Personnel Letter
- 81. 2.4 Branch school newsletter
- 82. 2.7 Branch newsletter
- 83. 2.1 Army Information Digest
- 84. 2.5 Army Times
- 85. 2.0 Soldiers
- 86. 2.4 Military professional journals
- 87. 2.5 OCS, ROTC, or USMA presentations
- 88. 2.6 Branch Basic Course presentations
- 89. 2.7 Advanced Branch Course presentations

Questions 90 through 99 are decisions made by Army officers in the course of their careers. Select the number on the scale below that shows the adequacy of the information that you used to make each decision, and write the number in the blank beside that decision. If you have not made the decision, enter "0" for Does Not Apply. Mark each question.

- 4 = Very adequate
- 3 = Moderately adequate
- 2 = Moderately inadequate
- 1 = Very inadequate
- 0 = Does not apply

Mean

- 90. 3.4 Applying for Voluntary Indefinite
- 91. 3.2 Applying for Regular Army
- 92. 2.9 Initial branch selection
- 93. 2.3 Changing branch
- 94. 2.7 Job-related technical training
- 95. 2.8 Graduate education
- 96. 2.4 Special Career Field (e.g., Foreign Area Specialist, Research and Development, etc.)
- 97. 2.5 Selecting specific command assignments
- 98. 2.5 Selecting specific staff assignments
- 99. 2.5 Making choices for recent assignment Preference Forms

Part II

PROPOSED COUNSELING SYSTEMS

Four possible alternatives for a new system of providing career information and vocational guidance to Army officers are briefly outlined in this section. Following the description of each system are questions about that system.

Read the description of each system, and then answer the questions about that system. If you are not now planning to make the Army a career, try to answer from the point of view of a career officer, that is, as if you were planning to stay in the Army for twenty or thirty years.

Alternative A:

COMPUTERIZED COUNSELORS

WHO ARE THE COUNSELORS?

Counselors are computer consoles located on most CONARC and possibly some overseas posts. They are geographically located to be accessible to officers on all posts.

Each console is connected to one central computer located in Washington, D.C. The central computer contains a great store of very current vocational information, such as which assignments are available, the requirements of available assignments, and desired characteristics of individual officers.

Using the data from the central computer, the consoles use many of the question and answer techniques of a person trained in vocational counseling.

WHAT ARE THE COUNSELOR'S FUNCTIONS?

Using the rules which the officer will know (e.g., how much weight is given to rank education, training, OERs, the officer's preferences), the computer matches requirements of available assignments with the characteristics of the officer to be assigned, thus providing a narrowed range of assignments from which the officer selects his preferences.

The officer inputs his preferences to the computer. Then the computer gives the officer a tentative assignment. At a later specified date, the computer makes final assignments which are based on characteristics and preferences of all available officers. The officer may request a review of his assignment by OPO.

The consoles assist the officer in setting career goals based on the officer's abilities, interests, values, etc. The consoles help the officer establish long-range career plans involving assignments, education, and military training.

QUESTIONS ON COMPUTERIZED COUNSELING

PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY, OR PRINT. BE BRIEF BUT CLEAR. IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, WRITE ON THE BACK OF THE PAGE.

100. What is the most important advantage for officers of this system?
101. List any other important advantages for officers.
102. What is the most important disadvantage for officers of this system?
103. List any other important disadvantages for officers.
104. What, if anything, is missing from this system? List only important items.

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think this system would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

- 4 = Very helpful
- 3 = Moderately helpful
- 2 = Not very helpful
- 1 = Not at all helpful

Mean

- 105. 2.7 Applying for Voluntary Indefinite
- 106. 2.7 Applying for Regular Army
- 107. 2.5 Selecting branch
- 108. 2.6 Selecting graduate education
- 109. 2.7 Selecting Special Career Field
- 110. 2.6 Selecting job-related technical training
- 111. 2.9 Making choices for assignment Preference Form
- 112. 2.0 Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army

- 113. If the Army develops and adopts a computerized career guidance system along these lines, how satisfactory would you find it?
Check (✓) one of the following.
 - 4 8 Very satisfactory
 - 3 32 Satisfactory
 - 2 39 Unsatisfactory
 - 1 21 Very unsatisfactory

- 114. List any comments you have on this system.

Alternative B:

OPO COUNSELORS FREQUENTLY ON POST

WHO ARE THE COUNSELORS?

Counselors are OPO assignment officers who have received a short course in Army career counseling and have experience as Army officers. They are not professionals in vocational guidance.

Operating out of a branch office in Washington, D.C., each counselor regularly visits posts within a limited geographical area. All CONARC posts and possibly some overseas posts will either be visited by or close to a post which is visited by a counselor.

WHAT ARE THE COUNSELOR'S FUNCTIONS?

In Washington, D.C., a central computer keeps track of all available assignments, the requirements for these assignments, and the competition for the assignments from the various posts. Officers' records are kept on post for ease in updating by the officers and for use by the counselor.

The counselor has a computer console on post to help him use the central computer to find vacancies and to narrow the range of possible assignments for a given officer to those for which he is qualified.

The counselor helps the officer select his next assignment by discussing his realm of possible assignments and then learning the officer's preferences.

The counselor makes a tentative assignment while the officer is present. Later, the counselor coordinates the assignment he has made with assignments made from other posts and makes a final assignment. He reports the final assignment to the officer.

Counselors give some help to officers in setting career goals and in establishing long-range career plans.

QUESTIONS ON OPO COUNSELORS FREQUENTLY ON POST

PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY, OR PRINT. BE BRIEF BUT CLEAR. IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, WRITE ON THE BACK OF THE PAGE.

115. What is the most important advantage for officers of this system?
116. List any other important advantages for officers.
117. What is the most important disadvantage for officers of this system?
118. List any other important disadvantages for officers.
119. What, if anything, is missing from this system? List only important items.

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think this system would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

- 4 = Very helpful
- 3 = Moderately helpful
- 2 = Not very helpful
- 1 = Not at all helpful

Mean

- 120. 3.3 Applying for Voluntary Indefinite
- 121. 3.3 Applying for Regular Army
- 122. 2.9 Selecting branch
- 123. 3.0 Selecting graduate education
- 124. 3.1 Selecting Special Career Field
- 125. 3.0 Selecting job-related technical training
- 126. 3.3 Making choices for assignment Preference Form
- 127. 2.8 Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army

- 128. If the Army develops and adopts an officer career guidance system along these lines (OPO COUNSELORS FREQUENTLY ON POST), how satisfactory would you find it? Check (✓) one of the following.

- | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------------|
| | x | |
| 4 | <u>29</u> | Very satisfactory |
| 3 | <u>54</u> | Satisfactory |
| 2 | <u>15</u> | Unsatisfactory |
| 1 | <u>2</u> | Very unsatisfactory |

- 129. List any comments you have on this system.

Alternative C:

OPO COUNSELORS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHO ARE THE COUNSELORS?

Counselors are OPO assignment officers who have received a short course in Army Career Counseling and have experience as Army officers. They are not professionals in vocational guidance. They are stationed in branch offices in Washington, D.C., and are available to all officers by visit, phone, or mail.

WHAT ARE THE COUNSELOR'S FUNCTIONS?

Counselors have access to a central computer which keeps records of all available assignments, the requirements for each assignment, and desired officer characteristics (rank, education, training, past assignments, preferences, OERs, long range career plans, etc.).

When a request is received, the counselor solicits from the officer updated information on his experience and qualifications and his preferences about general assignment characteristics (geographical location, type of assignment preferred, civilian education facilities nearby, etc.). These characteristics and preferences are given to the computer.

Using the computer, the counselor selects from all possible assignments those for which a given officer is qualified. A list of these assignments is mailed to the officer for his selection of those he prefers.

Counselors give some help to officers in setting career goals and in establishing long-range career plans.

QUESTIONS ON OPO COUNSELORS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY, OR PRINT. BE BRIEF BUT CLEAR. IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, WRITE ON THE BACK OF THE PAGE.

130. What is the most important advantage for officers of this system?
131. List any other important advantages for officers.
132. What is the most important disadvantage for officers of this system?
133. List any other important disadvantage for officers.
134. What, if anything, is missing from this system? List only important items.

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think this system would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

4 = Very helpful
3 = Moderately helpful
2 = Not very helpful
1 = Not at all helpful

Mean

135. 3.0 Applying for Voluntary Indefinite
136. 3.1 Applying for Regular Army
137. 2.7 Selecting branch
138. 2.8 Selecting graduate education
139. 2.8 Selecting Special Career Field
140. 2.7 Selecting job-related technical training
141. 3.0 Making choices for assignment Preference Form
142. 2.5 Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army

143. If the Army develops and adopts an officer career guidance system along these lines (OPO COUNSELORS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.), how satisfactory would you find it? Check (✓) one of the following.

| | | |
|---|-----------|---------------------|
| | % | |
| 4 | <u>13</u> | Very satisfactory |
| 3 | <u>54</u> | Satisfactory |
| 2 | <u>28</u> | Unsatisfactory |
| 1 | <u>6</u> | Very unsatisfactory |

144. List any comments you have on this system.

Alternative D:

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS ON POST

WHO ARE THE COUNSELORS?

Counselors are civilians professionally trained in vocational guidance. Counselors are permanently stationed on most major CONARC and some overseas posts and are easily accessible to officers from all posts.

Officers' records are maintained at the counselor stations, where both the officers and counselors can easily update and use them.

Computer consoles connect the counselors with a central assignment data bank in Washington, D.C. This data bank contains relevant information about assignment vacancies, assignment requirements, number of men eligible, etc.

WHAT ARE THE COUNSELOR'S FUNCTIONS?

The counselor uses his computer console to input an individual officer's characteristics and preferences to the central computer. From the computer he receives a list of available assignments which match the officer's requirements. The officer and the counselor decide which of the available jobs will be best for the officer's career goals.

The counselor's sole responsibility is to represent officers, and he has no responsibility for filling jobs. He is independent of OPO, acting as a liaison with OPO branch personnel whose major job is to fill vacancies. The counselor has a strong influence with OPO in determining all assignments; and in exceptional cases, he can actually make the assignments. The counselor is continually helping officers find their best assignment.

Counselors have special skills and can therefore assist officers in setting realistic career goals based on the abilities, interests, and values of the individual officer. Counselors help officers establish long-range career plans involving assignments, education, and military training.

QUESTIONS ON PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS ON POST

PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY, OR PRINT. BE BRIEF BUT CLEAR. IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, WRITE ON THE BACK OF THE PAGE.

145. What is the most important advantage for officers of this system?
146. List any other important advantages for officers.
147. What is the most important disadvantage for officers of this system?
148. List any other important disadvantages for officers.
149. What, if anything, is missing from this system? List only important items.

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think this system would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

- 4 = Very helpful
- 3 = Moderately helpful
- 2 = Not very helpful
- 1 = Not at all helpful

Mean

- 150. 3.3 Applying for Voluntary Indefinite
- 151. 3.3 Applying for Regular Army
- 152. 3.0 Selecting branch
- 153. 3.3 Selecting graduate education
- 154. 3.3 Selecting Special Career Field
- 155. 3.2 Selecting job-related technical training
- 156. 3.3 Making choices for assignment Preference Form
- 157. 2.9 Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army

- 158. If the Army develops and adopts an officer career guidance system along these lines (PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS ON POST), how satisfactory would you find it? Check (✓) one of the following.

| | <u>%</u> | |
|---|-----------|---------------------|
| 4 | <u>46</u> | Very satisfactory |
| 3 | <u>33</u> | Satisfactory |
| 2 | <u>15</u> | Unsatisfactory |
| 1 | <u>6</u> | Very unsatisfactory |

- 159. List any comments you have on this system.

Part III

CHARACTERISTICS OF CAREER GUIDANCE SYSTEMS

The following questions ask you to evaluate specific characteristics of possible career guidance systems. These characteristics resemble, but are independent of, the systems presented in Part II.

In questions 160 through 163 rank the four ways of having your assignments made. Write 1 in the blank beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.^a

- 160. 2.0 By experienced branch personnel who use a combination of rules and their own judgment (as is done now).
- 161. 3.3 By experienced branch personnel who use a combination of rules that I know (e.g., how much weight is given to rank, education, training, OERs, my preferences) and their own judgment.
- 162. 3.2 By a computer using rules that I know (e.g., how much weight is given to rank, education, training, OERs, my preferences), with the final decision made by experienced branch personnel.
- 163. 1.7 By a computer using rules that I know (e.g., how much weight is given to rank, education, training, OERs, my preferences).

In questions 164 through 166 rank the three ways of influencing your assignments. Write 1 in the blank beside your first choice, 2 beside your second, and 3 beside your third.

- 164. 1.9 Provide information about myself, including preferences for general locations and types of assignment, to experienced personnel who make the final decision.
- 165. 2.6 Provide my specific assignment preferences, selected from a list of available assignments, to experienced personnel who make the final decision.
- 166. 1.6 Provide branch personnel with my preferred next assignment that I have selected after personally contacting commanders who have submitted requisitions to fill specific vacancies.

In questions 167 through 169 rank the three methods of interacting with a career guidance/information system, assuming identical information would come from each. Write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second, and 3 beside your third.

- 167. 1.7 Interaction with a computer console that supplies information, answers career questions, and records my preferences.
- 168. 2.8 Interaction with a human counselor who supplies information, answers career questions, and records my preferences.
- 169. 1.5 Interaction by mail with a counselor who supplies information, answers career questions, and records my preferences.

^a To keep these data consistent with other data in the report, a rank of 1 was set equal to 3 and a rank of 3 set equal to 1, etc. for purpose of data analysis. (i.e., A high value indicates a more favorable mean ranking than a low value.)

Questions 170 through 184 ask you to evaluate types of personnel who may provide career guidance. Select the number on the scale below that shows how good you think each counselor would be in the specified situation, and write the number in the blank beside that counselor. Mark each question.

- 4 = Excellent
- 3 = Good
- 2 = Fair
- 1 = Poor

Types of career counselor for helping you plan your next assignment.

Mean

- 170. 2.4 My commanding officer
- 171. 2.9 OPO assignment officer
- 172. 2.7 OPO career counselor (non-professional)
- 173. 2.3 Career counselor independent of OPO (non-professional)
- 174. 3.0 Professional career counselor independent of OPO

Types of career counselor for helping you get your preferred next assignment.

Mean

- 175. 2.2 My commanding officer
- 176. 3.3 OPO assignment officer
- 177. 2.7 OPO career counselor (non-professional)
- 178. 2.1 Career counselor independent of OPO (non-professional)
- 179. 2.5 Professional career counselor independent of OPO

Types of career counselor for helping you plan an assignment sequence to reach your long range career goals.

Mean

- 180. 2.2 My commanding officer
- 181. 2.9 OPO assignment officer
- 182. 2.8 OPO career counselor (non-professional)
- 183. 2.4 Career counselor independent of OPO (non-professional)
- 184. 3.0 Professional career counselor independent of OPO.

Questions 185 through 217 ask you to evaluate types of information that can be received from or input to a career guidance system. Select the number on the scale below that shows how useful (valuable) you feel each type of information is to you and write the number in the blank beside that question. Mark each question.

- 4 = Of GREAT value, DEFINITELY INCLUDE in system
- 3 = Of MODERATE value, INCLUDE in system
- 2 = Of SOME value, POSSIBLY INCLUDE in system
- 1 = Of NO value, DO NOT INCLUDE in system

Types of general information

Mean

- 185. 3.7 My updated career information provided to OPO.
- 186. 3.6 My updated assignment preferences provided to OPO.
- 187. 3.2 My career status rank order among officers of like status.
- 188. 3.1 My rank order among officers of like status on OER ratings.

Career planning information

Mean

- 190. 3.7 Realistic career goals for me.
- 191. 3.1 Branches that are career enhancing for me.
- 192. 3.4 Branch I should choose based on my abilities, interests, values, career ambitions, etc.
- 193. 3.4 Assignments I should try to get.
- 194. 3.6 Military schooling that is career enhancing for me.
- 195. 3.5 Military schooling that fits my abilities, interests, values, etc.
- 196. 3.6 Civilian education programs that are career enhancing for me.
- 197. 3.4 Civilian education programs that fit my abilities, interests, values, etc.
- 198. 3.3 Special Career Fields (Research and Development, Computer Science, etc.) that are career enhancing for me.
- 199. 3.0 Retirement career goals and planning.

Continue to use the following scale.

- 4 = Of GREAT value, DEFINITELY INCLUDE in system
- 3 = Of MODERATE value, INCLUDE in system
- 2 = Of SOME value, POSSIBLY INCLUDE in system
- 1 = Of NO value, DO NOT INCLUDE in system

Information about specific assignments

Mean

- 200. 3.7 Special requirements (rank, training, education, interpersonal skills, etc.)
- 201. 3.3 Duties
- 202. 2.9 Number of officers currently eligible for this assignment
- 203. 3.4 My current probability of getting this assignment (based on rank, skills, OERs, competition, etc.)
- 204. 3.4 Career enhancement potential
- 205. 3.5 Promotion potential
- 206. 2.2 Contact with high ranking officers
- 207. 3.1 Geographical location
- 208. 3.0 Civilian education facilities nearby
- 209. 3.4 Housing facilities
- 210. 2.7 Recreational facilities

Information about your promotion to next higher rank

Mean

- 211. 3.6 Number of officers eligible
- 212. 3.6 Percent of eligibles to be promoted
- 213. 3.6 Minimum time of commissioned service before becoming eligible
- 214. 3.6 Minimum time in current rank before becoming eligible
- 215. 3.4 Maximum time of eligibility
- 216. 3.7 My current probability of promotion
- 217. 3.2 Characteristics of last group that got promoted (branch, average OERs, date of rank, etc.)

APPENDIX B COMPARISONS AMONG SUBGROUPS OF THE TOTAL SAMPLE

Appendix B tabulates the responses of subjects to allow comparisons among the subgroups of the total sample. The responses of company and field grade officers are displayed in the first two data columns; the responses of officers with different career intentions are presented in the last three columns.

The data for company and field grade officers are contrasted to determine whether differences exist in the responses of officers as a function of grade. Of the total sample, 76% were company grade and the remaining 24% were field grade officers

The total sample was divided into subgroups with different career intentions on the basis of how they responded to question 17. Those officers indicating that they "definitely ..." or "probably will seek a career in the Army" were assigned to the Career group, those "undecided about a career in the Army" were assigned to the Undecided group and the subgroup responding that they "probably..." or "definitely will not seek a career in the Army" were assigned to the Leave group. Of the total sample, 55% were in the Career subgroup, 13% in the Undecided subgroup, and the remaining 32% in the Leave subgroup.

The importance of career intentions as a variable is threefold: (1) they will color the attitude of the respondent to the questionnaire items; (2) they are, in a sense, the ultimate measure of counseling success; and (3) career intentions are a useful classification variable to identify target populations for counseling.

As with Appendix A the numerical response data for all subgroups are presented and labeled either as percentages or means, as appropriate for each question. The specific number of examinees (N) on which each mean (X) was based is shown in the adjacent column. Questions 6-9, 12-52, 113, 128, 143, and 158 give the percentage of the total sample, while questions 53-99, 105-112, 120-127, 135-142, 150-157, and 160-217 give the mean of rated responses. For item 11 the mean number of years for each group is presented. Because a complete reproduction of the questionnaire appears in Appendix A, only items for which numerical data exist are shown.

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APPENDIX B

Table B-1

THE RESPONSES OF EXAMINEES DIVIDED INTO SUBGROUPS DIFFERING
BY GRADE AND CAREER INTENTIONS
(Total sample N = 615)
(page 1 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |
| 6. | What is your current grade? | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Second Lieutenant | 21 | - | 7 | 36 | 24 |
| 2. | First Lieutenant | 42 | - | 14 | 40 | 60 |
| 3. | Captain | 36 | - | 36 | 21 | 14 |
| 4. | Major | - | 69 | 29 | 4 | 1 |
| 5. | Lt Colonel | - | 31 | 13 | - | 0 |
| 6. | Colonel | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 7-8. | What is your career branch? | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Infantry | 20 | 28 | 29 | 14 | 12 |
| 2. | Armor | 16 | 15 | 18 | 14 | 14 |
| 3. | Air Defense | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | - |
| 4. | Field Artillery | 11 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 12 |
| 5. | Engineer | 15 | 13 | 11 | 16 | 21 |
| 6. | Signal | 6 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 8 |
| 7. | Chemical | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 8. | Quartermaster | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| 9. | Ordnance | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. | Transportation | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 |
| 11. | Adjutant General | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. | Military Police | 4 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| 13. | Finance | 0 | 2 | 1 | - | - |
| 14. | Military Intelligence | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 15. | Women's Army Corps | 4 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 4 |
| 16. | Army Nurse Corps | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 17. | Dental Corps | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - |
| 18. | Medical Corps | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 19. | Medical Service Corps | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| 20. | Judge Advocate General | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - |
| 21. | Chaplains | 1 | 6 | 4 | - | - |
| 9. | What is your component? | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Regular Army | 23 | 61 | 44 | 27 | 11 |
| 2. | Reserve | 76 | 38 | 55 | 70 | 89 |
| 3. | Other: Specify | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - |

NOTE: Different N's within subsamples will cause percentages to differ; e.g., Colonels comprise 1% of the field grade officers but only 0.2% of the total sample.

Table B-1 (page 2 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|--|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |
| 10-11. | How many full years of active federal commissioned service have you completed? Presented by subsample. | | | | | |
| | Mean years completed | 2 | 13 | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| | Number | 456 | 150 | 338 | 81 | 194 |
| 12. | Are you serving in other than your first obligated tour? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| | 1. Does not apply | 7 | 35 | 22 | 6 | 3 |
| | 2. Yes | 38 | 57 | 56 | 28 | 22 |
| | 3. No, but I plan to extend | 6 | - | 6 | 6 | 2 |
| | 4. No | 49 | 8 | 15 | 59 | 74 |
| 13. | Have you ever received an accelerated promotion? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| | 1. Yes | 6 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 6 |
| | 2. No | 94 | 92 | 93 | 96 | 94 |
| 14. | Have you ever been passed over for a promotion? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| | 1. Yes | - | 16 | 8 | 1 | - |
| | 2. No | 100 | 84 | 92 | 99 | 100 |
| 15. | What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| | 1. Did not complete high school | - | - | 0 | - | - |
| | 2. Completed high school | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| | 3. Attended college, but did not receive degree | 17 | 13 | 23 | 17 | 3 |
| | 4. Received college degree (B.S., B.A., or equivalent) | 64 | 52 | 55 | 60 | 75 |
| | 5. Attended graduate school but did not receive graduate degree | 7 | 8 | 6 | 11 | 7 |
| | 6. Received Master's degree (M.S., M.A., or equivalent) | 6 | 20 | 10 | 6 | 10 |
| | 7. Received Doctor's degree (Ph.D., M.D., J.D., or equivalent) | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 3 |

Table B-1 (page 3 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|--|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |
| 16. | If you were given more voice in decisions which affect your Army career, what effect would this have on your decision to remain in the Army? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Strong influence to stay | 51 | 57 | 66 | 64 | 25 |
| 2. | Slight influence to stay | 31 | 24 | 18 | 31 | 47 |
| 3. | No effect | 18 | 19 | 16 | 5 | 28 |
| 17. | What are your present plans for making the Army a career for twenty or more years? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | <u>Definitely</u> will seek a career in the Army | 24 | 85 | 71 | - | - |
| 2. | <u>Probably</u> will seek a career in the Army | 18 | 11 | 29 | - | - |
| 3. | <u>Undecided</u> about a career in the Army | 16 | 2 | - | 100 | - |
| 4. | <u>Probably</u> will <u>not</u> seek a career in the Army | 16 | 1 | - | - | 39 |
| 5. | <u>Definitely</u> will <u>not</u> seek a career in the Army | 25 | 1 | - | - | 61 |
| 18. | How satisfied are you with your current career branch? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Very satisfied | 39 | 45 | 48 | 28 | 32 |
| 2. | Moderately satisfied | 38 | 42 | 41 | 44 | 33 |
| 3. | Moderately dissatisfied | 11 | 11 | 8 | 12 | 14 |
| 4. | Very dissatisfied | 8 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 15 |
| 5. | No opinion | 4 | - | 0 | 7 | 5 |
| 19. | In making your initial branch choice, were you allowed to put as your first choice any branch you preferred? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample | | | | |
| 1. | Yes | 72 | 79 | 78 | 68 | 68 |
| 2. | Yes, but I was strongly advised to select a specific one | 8 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 9 |
| 3. | No | 20 | 15 | 16 | 22 | 23 |

Table B-1 (page 4 of 22)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|--|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |
| 20. | Were you originally assigned to the branch that you indicated in writing as being your first choice? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Yes | 60 | 71 | 68 | 64 | 53 |
| 2. | No | 40 | 29 | 32 | 36 | 47 |
| 21. | How much influence do you think your Preference Form <u>has</u> in determining your assignments? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Great influence | 8 | 8 | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| 2. | Moderate influence | 34 | 39 | 39 | 32 | 32 |
| 3. | Small influence | 35 | 42 | 37 | 42 | 36 |
| 4. | No influence | 15 | 11 | 11 | 16 | 19 |
| 5. | Don't know | 8 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| 22. | How much influence do you think your Preference Form <u>should have</u> in determining your assignments? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Great influence | 56 | 40 | 46 | 60 | 60 |
| 2. | Moderate influence | 41 | 57 | 52 | 36 | 38 |
| 3. | Small influence | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | - |
| 4. | No influence | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 5. | Don't know | 2 | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| 23. | How often are you getting the assignments <u>from your branch</u> which you need for your Army career development? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Always | 12 | 14 | 18 | 6 | 5 |
| 2. | Usually | 29 | 50 | 44 | 27 | 21 |
| 3. | Half the time | 11 | 19 | 39 | 17 | 11 |
| 4. | Seldom | 10 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 7 |
| 5. | Never | 7 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| 6. | Does not apply | 32 | 1 | 8 | 32 | 48 |

Table B-1 (page 5 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|---|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |
| 24. | How free do you feel to talk to your <u>commanders</u> about changing an assignment? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Very free | 37 | 49 | 48 | 35 | 29 |
| 2. | Moderately free | 36 | 38 | 36 | 32 | 38 |
| 3. | Moderately unfree | 20 | 9 | 13 | 25 | 21 |
| 4. | Very unfree | 7 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 11 |
| 25. | How successful have you been in dealing with your <u>commanders</u> about changing an assignment? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Very successful | 18 | 23 | 24 | 11 | 16 |
| 2. | Moderately successful | 22 | 44 | 37 | 24 | 14 |
| 3. | Moderately unsuccessful | 11 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 12 |
| 4. | Very unsuccessful | 10 | 7 | 7 | 10 | 14 |
| 5. | Haven't tried | 38 | 16 | 23 | 42 | 44 |
| 26. | How free do you feel about contacting your <u>branch</u> about changing an assignment? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Very free | 44 | 53 | 51 | 47 | 38 |
| 2. | Moderately free | 34 | 35 | 35 | 27 | 34 |
| 3. | Moderately unfree | 16 | 9 | 11 | 24 | 16 |
| 4. | Very unfree | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| 27. | How successful have you been in dealing with your <u>branch</u> about changing an assignment? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Very successful | 17 | 20 | 20 | 12 | 18 |
| 2. | Moderately successful | 13 | 30 | 23 | 11 | 8 |
| 3. | Moderately unsuccessful | 8 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 5 |
| 4. | Very unsuccessful | 13 | 15 | 13 | 17 | 12 |
| 5. | Haven't tried | 50 | 23 | 33 | 48 | 58 |
| 28. | Thus far have you been able to see an Army career-building pattern evolving for you? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Yes, there is a clear pattern | 12 | 31 | 26 | 6 | 6 |
| 2. | Yes, there is a vague pattern | 34 | 44 | 48 | 36 | 20 |
| 3. | No, there is no pattern | 19 | 15 | 13 | 25 | 23 |
| 4. | I can't tell if there is a pattern | 19 | 9 | 12 | 25 | 21 |
| 5. | Does not apply | 16 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 30 |

Table B-1 (page 6 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|--|-----------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |
| 29. | How satisfied are you with your Army career development? | | | | | |
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 1. | Very satisfied | 10 | 22 | 21 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. | Moderately satisfied | 42 | 51 | 55 | 43 | 26 |
| 3. | Moderately dissatisfied | 18 | 22 | 18 | 26 | 18 |
| 4. | Very dissatisfied | 10 | 5 | 4 | 12 | 15 |
| 5. | No opinion | 21 | - | 3 | 16 | 38 |

Questions 30 through 38 are factors which could influence you to select a particular career branch. Place a check (✓) in the blank beside each factor that led you to make your first choice of branch as recorded in your initial branch selection. Check as many as apply.

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | Percent of Subsample: | | | | |
| 30. | Previous formal education | 42 | 41 | 34 | 42 | 55 |
| 31. | Work experience (non-military) | 24 | 27 | 20 | 31 | 29 |
| 32. | Previous military experience (other than ROTC, OCS, or USMA) | 14 | 29 | 25 | 15 | 7 |
| 33. | ROTC, OCS, or USMA training | 39 | 43 | 42 | 42 | 37 |
| 34. | My personal preference | 77 | 79 | 76 | 82 | 77 |
| 35. | Army needs at the time | 14 | 20 | 17 | 20 | 9 |
| 36. | Advice from senior officers | 25 | 33 | 33 | 27 | 16 |
| 37. | Pressure from military superiors | 4 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 |
| 38. | Others: Specify _____ | 20 | 13 | 15 | 21 | 21 |

Table B-1 (page 7 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

Questions 39 through 45 are possible reasons for changing branch. If you plan to change or have changed branch, place a check (✓) in the blank beside each of your reasons for changing branch. Check as many as apply. If you have not changed or do not plan to change branch, check Does Not Apply.

Percent of Subsample:

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| 39. | Opportunities to use my education and skills better in new branch | 22 | 11 | 13 | 25 | 27 |
| 40. | Work uninteresting in old branch | 8 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 10 |
| 41. | Past assignments more appropriate for new branch | 6 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 5 |
| 42. | Army career opportunities limited in old branch | 9 | 8 | 8 | 12 | 6 |
| 43. | Pressure from military superiors | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 44. | Others: Specify _____ | 9 | 7 | 7 | 14 | 6 |
| 45. | Does not apply | 70 | 77 | 77 | 60 | 67 |

Questions 46 through 52 are possible methods of finding available assignments. Place a check (✓) in the blank beside each method which you have used. Check as many as apply.

Percent of Subsample:

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| 46. | Contacting my branch | 63 | 86 | 77 | 65 | 55 |
| 47. | Talking with my commanding officer | 47 | 51 | 55 | 44 | 36 |
| 48. | Talking with senior officers in my unit | 39 | 48 | 46 | 46 | 28 |
| 49. | Talking with senior officers in other units | 26 | 39 | 33 | 33 | 22 |
| 50. | Talking with fellow officers in my unit | 46 | 35 | 42 | 56 | 40 |
| 51. | Talking with fellow officers in other units | 38 | 38 | 37 | 41 | 38 |
| 52. | Others: Specify _____ | 9 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 8 |

Table B-1 (page 8 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

Questions 53 through 64 are factors that could influence your assignment preferences. Select the number on the scale below that shows how much influence each factor has on your assignment preferences, and write the number in the blank beside the factor. Mark each question.

4 = Major influence
3 = Moderate influence
2 = Little influence
1 = No influence

Mean response for each N

| | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
|---|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----------|-----|
| 53. Geographical location | 3.3 | 461 | 3.2 | 148 | 3.2 | 335 | 3.3 | 81 | 3.5 | 193 |
| 54. Chance to work under a specific commander or senior officer | 2.0 | 452 | 2.4 | 145 | 2.2 | 330 | 2.1 | 78 | 2.0 | 189 |
| 55. Contact with higher ranking officers | 1.8 | 451 | 2.0 | 144 | 2.0 | 329 | 1.8 | 78 | 1.7 | 188 |
| 56. Personal or family needs | 3.3 | 458 | 3.0 | 147 | 3.1 | 333 | 3.3 | 81 | 3.5 | 191 |
| 57. Recreational facilities | 2.5 | 452 | 2.1 | 144 | 2.2 | 330 | 2.4 | 78 | 2.6 | 188 |
| 58. Chance to acquire skills useful after leaving the Army | 2.8 | 456 | 2.3 | 145 | 2.5 | 332 | 2.8 | 79 | 3.1 | 190 |
| 59. Increase in advancement possibilities | 3.3 | 454 | 3.4 | 147 | 3.6 | 333 | 3.2 | 80 | 3.0 | 188 |
| 60. Utilization of present education or skills | 3.4 | 455 | 3.4 | 147 | 3.4 | 333 | 3.3 | 79 | 3.4 | 190 |
| 61. Chance to get more civilian education | 3.3 | 456 | 2.7 | 145 | 3.1 | 333 | 3.4 | 78 | 3.0 | 190 |
| 62. Pressure from senior officers | 1.4 | 451 | 1.4 | 144 | 1.4 | 329 | 1.4 | 78 | 1.4 | 188 |
| 63. Interesting work | 3.6 | 458 | 3.6 | 147 | 3.6 | 334 | 3.6 | 81 | 3.5 | 190 |
| 64. Other factors: Specify _____ | 2.5 | 83 | 2.5 | 31 | 2.5 | 70 | 2.7 | 13 | 2.4 | 31 |

Table B-1 (page 9 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

Questions 65 through 70 are possible methods of contacting your career branch in Washington, D.C. Select the number on the scale below that shows how often you have used each method to contact your branch, and write the number in the blank beside the method. (Do not include mailing your preference forms.) Mark each question.

4 = Never
3 = Once
2 = Twice
1 = Three or more times

Mean response for each N

| | | X | N | X | N | X | N | X | N | X | N |
|-----|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| 65. | I visited | 3.5 | 430 | 1.8 | 145 | 2.6 | 324 | 3.6 | 75 | 3.6 | 176 |
| 66. | I telephoned | 2.2 | 457 | 1.5 | 146 | 1.8 | 333 | 2.3 | 80 | 2.5 | 190 |
| 67. | A senior officer telephoned for me | 3.5 | 425 | 3.3 | 133 | 3.3 | 310 | 3.5 | 74 | 3.6 | 174 |
| 68. | I wrote | 3.4 | 426 | 2.0 | 142 | 2.7 | 316 | 3.4 | 73 | 3.6 | 179 |
| 69. | A senior officer wrote for me | 3.9 | 416 | 3.7 | 131 | 3.8 | 306 | 3.8 | 71 | 3.9 | 170 |
| 70. | Others: Specify _____ | 3.6 | 166 | 3.0 | 41 | 3.3 | 108 | 3.5 | 35 | 3.7 | 64 |

Questions 71 through 89 are possible sources of Army career guidance or information. Select the number on the scale below that shows the usefulness of each source, and write the number in the blank beside that source. Mark each source.

4 = Extremely useful
3 = Moderately useful
2 = Not very useful
1 = Not at all useful
0 = Haven't used this source

Mean response for each N

| | | X | N | X | N | X | N | X | N | X | N |
|-----|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| 71. | Your commanding officer | 3.0 | 422 | 3.2 | 145 | 3.2 | 326 | 3.0 | 75 | 2.9 | 166 |
| 72. | Fellow officers of higher grade | 3.1 | 440 | 3.1 | 147 | 3.1 | 332 | 3.1 | 81 | 3.0 | 174 |
| 73. | Fellow officers of my grade | 2.5 | 435 | 2.6 | 141 | 2.5 | 322 | 2.6 | 78 | 2.6 | 176 |
| 74. | Career branch managers | 3.1 | 330 | 3.0 | 143 | 3.1 | 299 | 3.0 | 57 | 3.0 | 117 |
| 75. | Field personnel officers | 2.6 | 255 | 2.1 | 124 | 2.4 | 241 | 2.4 | 42 | 2.6 | 96 |

Table B-1 (page 10 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | | | Career Intentions | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|-------------|-----|-----------|-----|-------------------|-----------|-----------|----|-----------|-----|
| | | Company | | Field | | Career | Undecided | Leave | | | |
| Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
| 76. | Senior enlisted men | 2.3 | 284 | 1.8 | 70 | 2.1 | 192 | 2.3 | 48 | 2.5 | 114 |
| 77. | Army Regulations | 2.4 | 337 | 2.4 | 132 | 2.5 | 289 | 2.4 | 62 | 2.2 | 118 |
| 78. | DA Pamphlet 600-3, "Career Planning for Army Officers" | 2.6 | 297 | 2.5 | 131 | 2.7 | 284 | 2.5 | 50 | 2.3 | 94 |
| 79. | Friends and relatives (non-military) | 1.9 | 267 | 1.6 | 55 | 1.7 | 151 | 1.9 | 54 | 2.0 | 117 |
| 80. | Army Personnel Letter | 2.3 | 246 | 2.4 | 121 | 2.4 | 238 | 2.3 | 41 | 2.2 | 88 |
| 81. | Branch school newsletter | 2.4 | 239 | 2.4 | 99 | 2.5 | 215 | 2.4 | 39 | 2.1 | 84 |
| 82. | Branch newsletter | 2.7 | 301 | 2.7 | 124 | 2.8 | 272 | 2.7 | 47 | 2.4 | 106 |
| 83. | Army Information Digest | 2.2 | 222 | 2.0 | 119 | 2.2 | 232 | 2.2 | 31 | 2.0 | 78 |
| 84. | Army Times | 2.5 | 379 | 2.6 | 131 | 2.6 | 303 | 2.6 | 63 | 2.4 | 144 |
| 85. | Soldiers | 2.1 | 314 | 1.9 | 96 | 2.0 | 239 | 2.0 | 48 | 2.1 | 123 |
| 86. | Military professional journals | 2.4 | 229 | 2.5 | 125 | 2.5 | 236 | 2.4 | 40 | 2.2 | 78 |
| 87. | OCS, ROTC, or USMA presentations | 2.6 | 340 | 2.2 | 81 | 2.5 | 225 | 2.5 | 61 | 2.6 | 135 |
| 88. | Branch Basic Course presentations | 2.6 | 350 | 2.3 | 115 | 2.5 | 253 | 2.6 | 60 | 2.6 | 152 |
| 89. | Advanced Branch Course presentations | 2.8 | 125 | 2.7 | 128 | 2.8 | 192 | 2.8 | 17 | 2.6 | 44 |

Table B-1 (page 11 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

Questions 90 through 99 are decisions made by Army officers in the course of their careers. Select the number on the scale below that shows the adequacy of the information that you used to make each decision, and write the number in the blank beside that decision. If you have not made the decision, enter "0" for Does Not Apply. Mark each question.

4 = Very adequate
 3 = Moderately adequate
 2 = Moderately inadequate
 1 = Very inadequate
 0 = Does not apply

Mean response for each N

| | X | N | X | N | X | N | X | N | X | N |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| 90. Applying for Voluntary Indefinite | 3.3 | 261 | 3.5 | 102 | 3.5 | 231 | 3.2 | 45 | 3.1 | 87 |
| 91. Applying for Regular Army | 3.2 | 182 | 3.3 | 109 | 3.4 | 215 | 2.8 | 44 | 3.0 | 32 |
| 92. Initial branch selection | 2.8 | 419 | 3.2 | 138 | 3.1 | 310 | 2.8 | 75 | 2.7 | 172 |
| 93. Changing branch | 2.2 | 109 | 2.8 | 33 | 2.6 | 73 | 2.0 | 25 | 2.1 | 44 |
| 94. Job-related technical training | 2.5 | 109 | 2.9 | 92 | 2.9 | 178 | 2.0 | 37 | 2.4 | 71 |
| 95. Graduate education | 2.8 | 176 | 2.8 | 89 | 2.8 | 166 | 2.5 | 42 | 2.9 | 57 |
| 96. Special Career Field (e.g., Foreign Area Specialist, Research and Development, etc.) | 2.3 | 128 | 2.6 | 54 | 2.6 | 112 | 2.0 | 33 | 1.9 | 37 |
| 97. Selecting specific command assignments | 2.4 | 420 | 2.8 | 113 | 2.8 | 235 | 1.9 | 39 | 2.2 | 59 |
| 98. Selecting specific staff assignments | 2.3 | 118 | 2.8 | 128 | 2.7 | 227 | 2.0 | 38 | 2.2 | 51 |
| 99. Making choices for recent assignment Preference Forms | 2.4 | 302 | 2.7 | 142 | 2.6 | 297 | 2.0 | 55 | 2.2 | 92 |

Table B-1 (page 12 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think a computerized counseling system would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

4 = Very helpful
3 = Moderately helpful
2 = Not very helpful
1 = Not at all helpful

Mean response for each N

| | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
|--|-----------------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----------|-----|
| 105. Applying for Voluntary Indefinite | 2.7 | 429 | 2.6 | 139 | 2.7 | 310 | 2.8 | 76 | 2.6 | 182 |
| 106. Applying for Regular Army | 2.7 | 429 | 2.6 | 139 | 2.8 | 310 | 2.8 | 76 | 2.5 | 182 |
| 107. Selecting branch | 2.6 | 428 | 2.4 | 139 | 2.5 | 310 | 2.5 | 76 | 2.5 | 181 |
| 108. Selecting graduate education | 2.6 | 428 | 2.6 | 139 | 2.7 | 309 | 2.6 | 76 | 2.4 | 182 |
| 109. Selecting Special Career Field | 2.7 | 429 | 2.6 | 138 | 2.7 | 309 | 2.6 | 76 | 2.6 | 182 |
| 110. Selecting job-related technical training | 2.7 | 429 | 2.5 | 139 | 2.7 | 310 | 2.8 | 76 | 2.5 | 182 |
| 111. Making choices for assignment Preference Form | 2.9 | 428 | 2.7 | 139 | 2.8 | 310 | 3.0 | 75 | 2.9 | 182 |
| 112. Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army | 2.0 | 429 | 2.0 | 139 | 2.0 | 310 | 2.3 | 76 | 1.9 | 182 |
| 113. If the Army develops and adopts a <u>computerized career guidance</u> system along these lines, how satisfactory would you find it? | Percent of Subsample: | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 = Very satisfactory | 8 | 10 | 8 | 6 | 8 | | | | | |
| 3 = Satisfactory | 34 | 24 | 30 | 43 | 30 | | | | | |
| 2 = Unsatisfactory | 40 | 37 | 40 | 36 | 38 | | | | | |
| 1 = Very unsatisfactory | 19 | 28 | 21 | 14 | 24 | | | | | |

Table B-1 (page 13 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think the system of an OPO counselor frequently on post would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

4 = Very helpful
3 = Moderately helpful
2 = Not very helpful
1 = Not at all helpful

Mean response for each N

| | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
|---|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----------|-----|
| 120. Applying for Voluntary Indefinite | 3.3 | 435 | 3.3 | 134 | 3.4 | 314 | 3.2 | 77 | 3.2 | 178 |
| 121. Applying for Regular Army | 3.2 | 435 | 3.3 | 135 | 3.4 | 315 | 3.2 | 77 | 3.1 | 178 |
| 122. Selecting branch | 2.9 | 434 | 2.9 | 135 | 3.0 | 315 | 2.9 | 77 | 2.8 | 177 |
| 123. Selecting graduate education | 3.0 | 435 | 3.1 | 135 | 3.1 | 315 | 2.9 | 77 | 2.8 | 178 |
| 124. Selecting Special Career Field | 3.1 | 434 | 3.2 | 135 | 3.2 | 314 | 3.0 | 77 | 3.0 | 178 |
| 125. Selecting job-rated technical training | 3.0 | 434 | 3.1 | 135 | 3.1 | 315 | 2.9 | 77 | 2.9 | 177 |
| 126. Making choices for assignment Preference Form | 3.2 | 434 | 3.3 | 135 | 3.3 | 315 | 3.2 | 77 | 3.2 | 177 |
| 127. Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army | 2.7 | 434 | 2.9 | 134 | 2.8 | 314 | 2.7 | 77 | 2.6 | 177 |
| 128. If the Army develops and adopts an officer career guidance system with OPO COUNSELORS FREQUENTLY ON POST how satisfactory would you find it? | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 = Very satisfactory | 26 | | 40 | | 33 | | 20 | | 25 | |
| 3 = Satisfactory | 56 | | 46 | | 52 | | 59 | | 55 | |
| 2 = Unsatisfactory | 16 | | 12 | | 13 | | 18 | | 18 | |
| 1 = Very unsatisfactory | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | | 3 | | 1 | |

Percent of Subsample

Table B-1 (page 14 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think the system of an OPO counselor in Washington, D.C. would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

4 = Very helpful
3 = Moderately helpful
2 = Not very helpful
1 = Not at all helpful

Mean response for each N

| | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
|--|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----------|-----|
| 135. Applying for Voluntary Indefinite | 3.0 | 429 | 3.1 | 133 | 3.1 | 304 | 2.9 | 78 | 2.9 | 180 |
| 136. Applying for Regular Army | 3.0 | 430 | 3.2 | 133 | 3.2 | 304 | 2.9 | 78 | 2.9 | 181 |
| 137. Selecting branch | 2.6 | 428 | 2.8 | 132 | 2.7 | 303 | 2.7 | 78 | 2.5 | 179 |
| 138. Selecting graduate education | 2.8 | 429 | 3.0 | 133 | 3.0 | 304 | 2.7 | 78 | 2.7 | 180 |
| 139. Selecting Special Career Field | 2.8 | 428 | 3.0 | 133 | 2.9 | 303 | 2.8 | 78 | 2.7 | 180 |
| 140. Selecting job-rated technical training | 2.7 | 429 | 2.9 | 133 | 2.8 | 304 | 2.7 | 78 | 2.6 | 180 |
| 141. Making choices for assignment Preference Form | 2.9 | 429 | 3.1 | 133 | 3.1 | 304 | 2.8 | 78 | 2.9 | 180 |
| 142. Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army | 2.5 | 429 | 2.6 | 133 | 2.6 | 304 | 2.5 | 78 | 2.3 | 180 |
| 143. If the Army develops and adopts an officer career guidance system with OPO COUNSELORS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. how satisfactory would you find it? | | | | | | | | | | |

Percent of Subsample :

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| 4 = Very satisfactory | 12 | 21 | 16 | 16 | 7 |
| 3 = Satisfactory | 52 | 61 | 58 | 51 | 50 |
| 2 = Unsatisfactory | 29 | 18 | 21 | 30 | 35 |
| 1 = Very unsatisfactory | 7 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 8 |

Table B-1 (page 15 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave |

A system may not be equally good for all decision points in an officer's career. Some decision points are listed below. Select the number on the scale below that shows how helpful you think the system with professional counselors on post would be for making each decision. Write the number in the blank beside the decision. Mark each decision.

4 = Very helpful
3 = Moderately helpful
2 = Not very helpful
1 = Not at all helpful

Mean response for each N

| | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
|---|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----------|-----|
| 150. Applying for Voluntary Indefinite | 3.3 | 424 | 3.2 | 134 | 3.3 | 306 | 3.2 | 74 | 3.3 | 178 |
| 151. Applying for Regular Army | 3.4 | 424 | 3.2 | 134 | 3.4 | 306 | 3.3 | 74 | 3.2 | 178 |
| 152. Selecting branch | 3.1 | 423 | 2.7 | 133 | 3.0 | 306 | 3.2 | 73 | 3.0 | 177 |
| 153. Selecting graduate education | 3.4 | 423 | 3.1 | 134 | 3.4 | 305 | 3.4 | 74 | 3.3 | 178 |
| 154. Selecting Special Career Field | 3.4 | 423 | 3.0 | 134 | 3.3 | 305 | 3.3 | 74 | 3.2 | 178 |
| 155. Selecting job-related technical training | 3.3 | 423 | 3.0 | 134 | 3.2 | 305 | 3.2 | 74 | 3.3 | 178 |
| 156. Making choices for assignment Preference Form | 3.3 | 423 | 3.0 | 134 | 3.2 | 305 | 3.4 | 74 | 3.3 | 178 |
| 157. Deciding whether or not to make a career of the Army | 3.0 | 423 | 2.5 | 135 | 2.8 | 306 | 3.1 | 74 | 2.8 | 178 |
| 158. If the Army develops and adopts an officer career guidance system with PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS ON POST, how satisfactory would <u>you</u> find it? | | | | | | | | | | |
| Percent of Subsample: | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 = Very satisfactory | 50 | | 30 | | 44 | | 48 | | 49 | |
| 3 = Satisfactory | 35 | | 31 | | 30 | | 41 | | 36 | |
| 2 = Unsatisfactory | 11 | | 24 | | 17 | | 11 | | 12 | |
| 1 = Very unsatisfactory | 4 | | 15 | | 9 | | 0 | | 4 | |

Table B-1 (page 16 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | | | | | | |
|---|--|-------------|-------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----|-----|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided | Leave | | | | | |
| Rank the four ways of <u>having your assignments made</u> . Write <u>1</u> beside your first choice, <u>2</u> beside your second choice, etc. ^a | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | | |
| Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 160. | By experienced branch personnel who use a combination of rules and their own judgment (as is done now). | 2.0 | 432 | 2.1 | 141 | 2.8 | 320 | 2.0 | 77 | 2.0 | 176 |
| 161. | By experienced branch personnel who use a combination of rules that I know (e.g., how much weight is given to rank, education, training, OERs, my preferences) and their own judgment. | 3.2 | 449 | 3.4 | 146 | 3.3 | 330 | 3.3 | 78 | 3.2 | 187 |
| 162. | By a computer using rules that I know (e.g., how much weight is given to rank, education, training, OERs, my preferences), with the final decision made by experienced branch personnel. | 3.2 | 443 | 3.0 | 143 | 3.1 | 320 | 3.2 | 78 | 3.2 | 188 |
| 163. | By a computer using rules that I know (e.g., how much weight is given to rank, education, training, OERs, my preferences). | 1.7 | 424 | 1.6 | 137 | 1.6 | 308 | 1.6 | 77 | 1.8 | 176 |
| Rank the three ways of <u>influencing your assignments</u> . Write <u>1</u> beside your first choice, <u>2</u> beside your second, and <u>3</u> beside your third. ^a | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 164. | Provide information about myself, including preferences for general locations and types of assignment, to experienced personnel who make the final decision. | 1.9 | 453 | 1.9 | 147 | 1.9 | 331 | 1.8 | 79 | 1.9 | 190 |

^a To keep these data consistent with other data in the report, a rank of 1 was set equal to 3 and a rank of 3 was set equal to 1, etc., for purposes of data analysis (i.e., a high value indicates a more favorable mean ranking than a low value).

Table B-1 (page 17 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided Leave |
| | | Mean response for each N | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
| 165. | Provide my specific assignment preferences, selected from a list of available assignments, to experienced personnel who make the final decision. | 2.5 | 454 | 2.8 | 147 |
| | | | | 2.7 | 332 |
| | | | | 2.4 | 79 |
| | | | | 2.4 | 190 |
| 166. | Provide branch personnel with my preferred next assignment that I have selected after personally contacting commanders who have submitted requisitions to fill specific vacancies. | 1.6 | 452 | 1.4 | 145 |
| | | | | 1.4 | 328 |
| | | | | 1.8 | 79 |
| | | | | 1.7 | 190 |
| | Rank the three methods of interacting with a career guidance/information system, assuming identical information from each. Write <u>1</u> beside your first choice, <u>2</u> beside your second, and <u>3</u> beside your third. ^a | Mean response for each N | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
| 167. | Interaction with a <u>computer console</u> that supplies information, answers career question, and records my preferences. | 1.7 | 453 | 1.6 | 146 |
| | | | | 1.6 | 330 |
| | | | | 1.8 | 79 |
| | | | | 1.7 | 190 |
| 168. | Interaction with a <u>human counselor</u> who supplies information, answers career questions, and records my preferences. | 2.8 | 453 | 2.8 | 147 |
| | | | | 2.8 | 331 |
| | | | | 2.8 | 79 |
| | | | | 2.8 | 190 |
| 169. | Interaction by <u>mail</u> with a <u>counselor</u> who supplies information, answers career questions, and records my preferences. | 1.5 | 452 | 1.7 | 146 |
| | | | | 1.6 | 329 |
| | | | | 1.5 | 79 |
| | | | | 1.4 | 190 |

^a To keep these data consistent with other data in the report, a rank of 1 was set equal to 3 and a rank of 3 was set equal to 1, etc., for purposes of data analysis (i.e., a high value indicates a more favorable mean ranking than a low value).

Table B-1 (page 18 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----|-----|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided Leave | | | | | | |
| Questions 170 through 184 ask you to evaluate <u>types of personnel</u> who may provide career guidance. Select the number on the scale below that shows <u>how good</u> you think each counselor would be in the specified situation, and write the number in the blank beside that counselor. Mark <u>each</u> question. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 = Excellent 3 = Good 2 = Fair 1 = Poor | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Types of career counselor for helping you plan your next assignment. | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | | |
| 170. | My commanding officer | 2.4 | 460 | 2.6 | 148 | 2.5 | 336 | 2.4 | 79 | 2.3 | 193 |
| 171. | OPO assignment officer | 2.9 | 458 | 3.0 | 150 | 3.0 | 336 | 2.8 | 79 | 2.8 | 193 |
| 172. | OPO career counselor (non-professional) | 2.7 | 459 | 2.7 | 150 | 2.7 | 337 | 2.6 | 79 | 2.7 | 193 |
| 173. | Career counselor independent of OPO (non-professional) | 2.4 | 458 | 2.1 | 150 | 2.2 | 336 | 2.3 | 79 | 2.4 | 193 |
| 174. | Professional career counselor independent of OPO | 3.0 | 460 | 2.7 | 150 | 2.9 | 337 | 3.0 | 80 | 3.0 | 193 |

Table B-1 (page 19 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | |
|--|--|-------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | | Company | Field | Career Undecided | Leave |
| Types of <u>career counselor</u> for helping you <u>get your preferred</u> <u>next assignment</u> . | | | | | |
| Mean response for each N | | | | | |
| 175. | My commanding officer | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N |
| 176. | OPO assignment officer | 2.1 | 455 | 2.2 | 150 |
| 177. | OPO career counselor (non-professional) | 3.3 | 456 | 3.3 | 150 |
| 178. | Career counselor independent of OPO (non-professional) | 2.7 | 457 | 2.6 | 150 |
| 179. | Professional career counselor independent of OPO | 2.1 | 456 | 2.0 | 148 |
| Types of career counselor for helping you plan an assignment sequence to reach your long range career goals. | | | | | |
| Mean response for each N | | | | | |
| 180. | My commanding officer | 2.6 | 458 | 2.3 | 150 |
| 181. | OPO assignment officer | 2.1 | 457 | 2.3 | 150 |
| 182. | OPO career counselor (non-professional) | 2.9 | 458 | 2.9 | 149 |
| 183. | Career counselor independent of OPO (non-professional) | 2.8 | 458 | 2.8 | 149 |
| 184. | Professional career counselor independent of OPO. | 2.4 | 457 | 2.3 | 147 |
| | | 3.0 | 457 | 2.8 | 150 |

Table B-1 (page 20 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided Leave | | | | | | |
| Questions 185 through 217 ask you to evaluate <u>types of information</u> that can be received from or input to a career guidance system. Select the number on the scale below that shows <u>how useful</u> (valuable) you feel each type of information is <u>to you</u> and write the number in the blank beside that question. Mark <u>each question</u> . | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 = Of GREAT value, DEFINITELY INCLUDE in system | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 = Of MODERATE value, INCLUDE in system | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 = Of SOME value, POSSIBLY INCLUDE in system | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 = Of NO value, DO NOT INCLUDE in system | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | | | | | |
| Types of <u>general information</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 185. | My updated career information provided to OPO. | 3.7 | 461 | 3.7 | 150 | 3.8 | 337 | 3.6 | 81 | 3.7 | 193 |
| 186. | My updated assignment preferences provided to OPO. | 3.6 | 461 | 3.5 | 150 | 3.6 | 337 | 3.5 | 81 | 3.6 | 193 |
| 187. | My career status rank order among officers of like status. | 3.2 | 461 | 3.2 | 150 | 3.3 | 337 | 3.1 | 81 | 3.1 | 193 |
| 188. | My rank order among officers of like status on OER ratings. | 3.0 | 461 | 3.2 | 149 | 3.2 | 336 | 2.9 | 81 | 2.9 | 193 |
| Career <u>planning information</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 190. | Realistic career goals for me. | 3.7 | 462 | 3.6 | 150 | 3.7 | 338 | 3.6 | 81 | 3.7 | 193 |
| 191. | Branches that are career enhancing for me. | 3.2 | 461 | 2.8 | 148 | 3.0 | 335 | 3.3 | 81 | 3.3 | 193 |
| 192. | Branch I should choose based on my abilities, interests, values, career ambitions, etc. | 3.5 | 461 | 3.0 | 148 | 3.2 | 335 | 3.6 | 81 | 3.5 | 193 |
| 193. | Assignments I should try to get. | 3.4 | 461 | 3.5 | 149 | 3.5 | 336 | 3.5 | 81 | 3.3 | 193 |

Table B-1 (page 21 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| | | Company | Field | Career | Undecided Leave | | | | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | | | | |
| | | Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | |
| 194. | Military schooling that is career enhancing for me | 3.6 | 460 | 3.6 | 150 | 3.7 | 338 | 3.6 | 80 | 3.5 | 192 |
| 195. | Military schooling that fits my abilities, interests, values, etc. | 3.5 | 461 | 3.5 | 149 | 3.5 | 337 | 3.6 | 80 | 3.5 | 193 |
| 196. | Civilian education programs that are career enhancing for me | 3.6 | 462 | 3.5 | 149 | 3.7 | 337 | 3.6 | 81 | 3.5 | 193 |
| 197. | Civilian education programs that fit my abilities, interests, values, etc. | 3.5 | 462 | 3.4 | 148 | 3.5 | 336 | 3.4 | 81 | 3.4 | 193 |
| 198. | Special Career Fields (Research and Development, Computer Science, etc.) that are career enhancing for me | 3.4 | 461 | 3.0 | 149 | 3.2 | 337 | 3.2 | 80 | 3.4 | 193 |
| 199. | Retirement careers goals and planning | 3.0 | 462 | 2.9 | 150 | 3.0 | 338 | 2.9 | 81 | 3.0 | 193 |
| | Information about <u>specific assignments</u> | Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | |
| 200. | Special requirements (rank, training, education, interpersonal skills, etc.) | 3.7 | 462 | 3.7 | 150 | 3.7 | 338 | 3.7 | 81 | 3.7 | 193 |
| 201. | Duties | 3.4 | 462 | 3.2 | 150 | 3.3 | 338 | 3.4 | 81 | 3.4 | 193 |
| 202. | Number of officers currently eligible for this assignment | 3.0 | 462 | 2.6 | 150 | 2.8 | 338 | 2.9 | 81 | 3.0 | 193 |

Table B-1 (page 22 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----|-----|
| | | Company | Field | Career Undecided | Leave | | | | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | | |
| | | Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | |
| 203. | My current probability of getting this assignment (based on rank, skills, OERs, competition, etc.) | 3.5 | 462 | 3.2 | 150 | 3.4 | 338 | 3.5 | 81 | 3.4 | 193 |
| 204. | Career enhancement potential | 3.4 | 461 | 3.4 | 150 | 3.5 | 337 | 3.3 | 81 | 3.3 | 193 |
| 205. | Promotion potential | 3.5 | 460 | 3.5 | 150 | 3.6 | 338 | 3.3 | 80 | 3.4 | 192 |
| 206. | Contact with high ranking officers | 2.2 | 462 | 2.0 | 150 | 3.2 | 338 | 2.2 | 81 | 2.1 | 193 |
| 207. | Geographical location | 3.2 | 462 | 3.0 | 150 | 3.0 | 338 | 3.2 | 81 | 3.3 | 193 |
| 208. | Civilian education facilities nearby | 3.1 | 462 | 2.9 | 150 | 3.0 | 338 | 3.1 | 81 | 3.1 | 193 |
| 209. | Housing facilities | 3.3 | 462 | 3.4 | 150 | 3.4 | 338 | 3.2 | 81 | 3.4 | 193 |
| 210. | Recreational facilities | 2.7 | 461 | 2.5 | 150 | 2.6 | 337 | 2.5 | 81 | 2.9 | 193 |
| | Information about your <u>promotion to next higher rank</u> | Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | |
| 211. | Number of officers eligible | 3.6 | 462 | 3.5 | 149 | 3.6 | 338 | 3.4 | 81 | 3.5 | 192 |
| 212. | Percent of eligibles to be promoted | 3.6 | 462 | 3.6 | 149 | 3.6 | 338 | 3.6 | 81 | 3.6 | 192 |
| 213. | Minimum time of commissioned service before becoming eligible | 3.6 | 462 | 3.4 | 149 | 3.6 | 338 | 3.5 | 81 | 3.6 | 192 |

Table B-1 (page 23 of 23)

| Question No. | Text of Question | Grade Level | | Career Intentions | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--|--------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|-----------|-----|-----------|----|-----|-----|
| | | Company | Field | Career Undecided | Leave | | | | | | |
| | | Mean response for each N | | | | | | | | | |
| | | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | \bar{X} | N | | |
| 214. | Minimum time in current rank before becoming eligible | 3.6 | 462 | 3.4 | 149 | 3.6 | 338 | 3.5 | 81 | 3.6 | 192 |
| 215. | Maximum time of eligibility | 3.4 | 460 | 3.3 | 149 | 3.4 | 337 | 3.3 | 80 | 3.4 | 192 |
| 216. | My current probability of promotion | 3.7 | 461 | 3.7 | 149 | 3.8 | 337 | 3.7 | 81 | 3.7 | 192 |
| 217. | Characteristics of last group that got promoted (branch, average OERs, date of rank, etc.) | 3.2 | 461 | 3.2 | 149 | 3.2 | 337 | 3.2 | 81 | 3.1 | 192 |

APPENDIX C FREE-RESPONSE COMMENTS OF OFFICERS

Appendix C presents the free-response opinions and observations of officers regarding various aspects of the existing career counseling system with suggestions for improving future systems. All comments included are either direct quotes or close paraphrases (without quotation marks) of representative statements made by officers either to open-ended questionnaire items (questions 100-104, 114-119, 129-134, 144-149, and 159) or during the group or individual interviews.

ARI scientists performed a content analysis of item similarity and reduced the pool of comments to manageable size by deleting duplication. The similarity categories are presented in Table C-1. Following Table C-1 are the actual responses, grouped by these categories. If a response would fit more than one category, it was assigned randomly to one of the overlapping classifications.

The predominantly negative character of the free-response comments is a result of the framework of the group and individual sessions, which predisposed officers to express criticism of the current system. A purpose of the survey was to form a basis for planning research which would be responsive to needs and problems.

Readers are urged to exercise caution regarding the interpretation of this Appendix. The anonymity of sources precludes any generalizing from the critical comments to the attitudes of Army officers as a whole, as there is no way of knowing whether those who volunteered free responses were representative of the entire group.

Table C-1

ORGANIZATION OF FREE-RESPONSE COMMENTS

- I. Current Systems
 - A. Criticisms of OPD
 - B. Career Constraints
 - 1. The Branch System
 - 2. Career Patterns
- II. The Assignment Problem
 - A. Branch vs. Post Assignment
 - B. Criticisms and recommendations concerning assignments
- III. Counseling Needs
 - A. Why is Counseling Needed?
 - B. What is Needed?
 - 1. Characteristics of Good Counselors
 - 2. Authority of Counselors
- IV. Counseling Alternatives: Who or What?
 - A. Counselors With Army Knowledge
 - B. Counselors on Post
 - C. Computer Counselors
 - 1. Features and Advantages of Computerized System
 - 2. Human vs. Computer Counselor
- V. System Features
 - A. General Information and Features to Include in an Improved Counseling System
 - B. Specific Information and Features to Include in an Improved Counseling System
- VI. Miscellaneous

I. Current System

A. Criticisms of OPD

Should do away with preference form - Management doesn't use it. (applause)

Want feedback from preference form.

It's expensive to call - time's too short.

OPD's records are six months out of date.

Why one man and not another? Explain the Why of decisions.

"Reimburse officers for travel to OPD."

"OPD is a big mystery; can't be reached; men are afraid to ask OPD."

The OPD counselors in DC with computer consoles would be

"slow to react-(the system) needs more speed."

"Letters mean very little when a real problem exists."

"Counselors operating out of D.C.-the moment money gets short he stops coming."

"I've yet to meet anybody from OPD who really knew anything to help me. They're like recruiters with slots to fill."

Current system appears strongly biased in favor of aggressive officers stationed around D.C. They can visit OPD. Men based overseas are "out of luck."

"OPD counselors help their buddies out and screw over the rest."

The most important advantage of OPD counselor in D.C. is that

"you have a specific person you could call, write or see anytime."

"If I had not contacted OPD, I would have gotten out. OPD needs to get on the ball to encourage good men to stay. My commander sent me to OPD."

"personal biases (of OPD officers) should be rectified"

"hard to get to OPD and when you get there you don't get info you need-you get run-around. Want straight answers to questions - tell you if not qualified and how to get qualified."

Need better OPD contact with overseas officers. Both mail and phone are bad.

B. Career Constraints

1. The Branch System

"I am not at all convinced that the Army needs branch designations ... Even if the Army helps branches it should make assignments across branch lines flexible (so as to utilize specialized civilian training of officers)."

Branches are different. Grade structure is different.
Been treated well by Branch.

Do not lock officers into areas.

"Old branch too impersonal. New one seems to take more interest in the individual."

Lock all (branch) officers into similar promotion ladders providing equality of experience and opportunity.

Assure temporal continuity of branch career development policies.

"Contacting my branch did not gain information about assignment openings"

2. Career Patterns

What is needed is "a closer contact with the young officers coming on active duty so that they will not be afraid to approach (OPD branch) for help."

"Provide a variety of opinions on what to do next as an aid in developing a clearer picture of what is actually needed to complete a career"

The counseling system should recognize career patterns and recognize when diversions are necessary ... know career development patterns.

Keep in touch with man (provide feedback).

Provide scheduled counseling.

System must recognize officer's changing desires with age and experience.

System must incorporate the rapidly changing thinking at DA level on career planning and development.

Update preference forms to agree with current (career development) patterns. Assure that system has automatic update so that it tracks developing and changing patterns.

Assist officer to develop long term plans based on his abilities and needs. Should also allow him to change them.

Provide answers to long term effect that an assignment will have on career ... subtleties of preference.

Would like to know "what are your chances in completing career patterns."

Force young officers to career planning early.

"A separate career development system should be set up for reserve officer on active duty to eliminate the 'get what's left after the regulars have been served' attitude that prevails today."

II. The Assignment Problem

A. Branch vs. Post Assignment

Assure that command doesn't alter your assignment when (after) you arrive.

Commanders use you where you have experience, not where you need experience.

Use branch to assign men to posts, but not to positions on post.

"The preference form is a 'dream sheet'. Doesn't assign you to job, but to post, you determine where you go."

"OPD only gets you to an area, then commander does what he needs."

Local assignments are more important than locations. Commanders don't want central assignments. More information needed on post to aid commanders.

Remove OPD from DC and assign at post level to reduce hesitancy toward using service and eliminate the stigma attached to DC.

B. Criticisms and Recommendations Concerning Assignments

Junior officers do not know what they want or need. Don't give them too much information. (from a Major and a LTC)

Provide list of all available assignments, not just those branch wants you to know about.

"Preferences are jokes - why bother? No one looks at them."

Eliminate race prejudice from assignment process.

Equalize opportunity of reserve officers.

Eliminate clique preferences.

Place officers where they are qualified.

Eliminate "human factor" in assignment decisions.

Equalize opportunity of all officers for each assignment.

Reserve career development positions for career officers.

The system should exercise professional military judgment in assignments.

Provide timely assistance.

Provide long lead time on assignments, especially "following short tour." Assignments should be made at least a year in advance.

"Need to monitor whether an officer gets the job OPD sends him to; officer should give feedback to OPD."

III. Counseling Needs

A. Why is Counseling Needed?

"Junior officers don't get cold facts (Just idealistic snow jobs)"

"There is no counseling system. Each individual makes his own way. Bright ones learn how to get ahead."

"Vocational counseling (is) needed in developing a career, and training an officer for assignments at higher levels of command."

Assure good professional training of officers with less than optimal characteristics (develop their careers - help them overcome their weaknesses with on-the-job experience).

Discover and utilize man's interests and needs in addition to stated preferences in assignment decisions.

"The most important advantage of professional counselors is their understanding of personality and occupational requirements."

"Experienced counselors (not semi-pro, school taught) capable of informing the officer of his needs and jobs available to him are needed."

Success of career counselors hinges on % times they succeed in placing each man to his liking.

Records aren't available on post, only get vague answers to questions about career planning.

Don't understand how to fill out preference form.

"Allow me to obtain jobs I'll be happy doing."

Provide easy access to information about Special Career Fields.

Officers need a professional counselor to talk to for certain problems (e.g. going to medical school)

"There is no feeling that the officer has much choice of his future."

"What is needed is ability to project what I am going to be doing in the next 5 to 7 years; I need to plan for my family."

"The Army loses many talented young men because they don't get challenging jobs to start with; they need work appropriate to their potential."

B. What is Needed?

1. Characteristics of Good Counselors

The counselors should be selected on basis of their desire to help fellow officers. "OPD (should not be) just another assignment."

"Make counseling a tour toward promotion to lure good men."

Make counselor an Army officer career field with training program.

"Officers assigned to OPD should have their masters in Guidance and Counseling."

"Give counselors professional counseling training."

Counselors should be readily approachable - not sarcastic, evasive, etc.

Important to have impartial counselor

"To be frank with the officer as to how he stands"

"Local commander not always available and doesn't know all answers; would like computer terminal as information source, coupled with professional counselor."

2. Authority of Counselors

"We don't want a shrink, we want someone with power!"

Counselors need a direct chain of command to OPD. Not to post.

Provide firm (decision rules) lines of authority between civilian counselors and OPD.

Interact directly with individual who has the authority to make a decision.

"The (professional) counselor should be an authorized OPD representative and not independent of OPD in order to prevent bogging down of communications."

IV. Counseling Alternatives

Who or What?

A. Counselors with Army Knowledge

"It's doubtful if civilian counselors really understand military system well enough to give best advice on career development."

The career counselor should have work experience in OPD.

Use retired military as counselors, they have a military background and contacts at OPD.

Counselors should be field grade or retired field grade officers with special training.

The career counselor should be a professional senior officer of his own branch, who is independent of OPD.

"Any career counselor should have had an overseas tour
Counselors advising on overseas tours when they haven't had one themselves is ridiculous."

Use only military to plan military careers.

Avoid parochial counseling. The counselor should have served at many bases.

B. Counselors on Post

"Counselors tied to desks don't know what is going on in the field."

"You can talk back when OPD counselors come to your post."

"1) Teams should be sent out with both professional counselors and branch-oriented non professional counselors.

2) Computer consoles should remain on post...

3) OPD should remain as further counseling opportunity."

"Senior officers would not know when or if their subordinates were leaving and for what reasons" when there are professional counselors on post.

Professional counselors on post "might be denied access to information that would be beneficial to career development."

"Personality of counselor is a major factor and will differ post to post."

"I feel it would be of tremendous value if for no other reason, the individual could be assured the counselor would have up-to-date info on trends, requirements and needs of his branch and generally throughout the Army, and an unbiased outlook."

Best system would be OPD visits to post plus a computer console on post.

"This system would bring the officer closer to his travel. It would be ideal if counseling on career schooling, applications related training, etc., or all information that OPD counselors now give could be done on this level. It would get officers to take a greater part in their career planning."

"These traveling salesman type counselors are not a reliable source because people know that he isn't going to be around when the final orders come down and something is wrong."

C. The Computer as Counselor

a. Criticisms of a Totally Computerized System

"Would like to find out about assignments that are available - then go to someone to talk to."

Any system must have a human review/override provision to mitigate effects of other human factors such as a bad OER which might produce undue bias on machine.

Computer should have counselor who can answer non-programmed questions.

"Personal contact with counselor creates the feeling that officer has control over career as opposed to being controlled."

The officer misses the chance to "sell" himself by showing his strength of character or personality" in computerized counseling.

The counselor should be an "emotional human being that has had many of the same problems as the man planning his career (rather than a computer)."

Computerized counseling doesn't provide "eye ball contact!"

"If an officer has potential a computer can't see it. If he has had a bad break the computer can't see it."

Computerized counseling is "too impersonal to be used for such an important step as choosing a career."

"It is like throwing dice for an assignment if the human counselor isn't there to be an interpreter for the computer."

"When the phones can't connect you to DC, how can you expect a computer to work?"

b. The Computer as Counselor: Features and Advantages

"Possibly the West Point Protective Association would be broken down - which would be good".

The computer would avoid "moody, variable OPD."

Reduce pressure/conflict-of-interest on counselors to fill particular slots.

Reduce effect of personality clashes of man with OPD, Counselor, Superiors.

System should try to emphasize performance over promotions so that officers will put more emphasis on doing their current jobs well.

An immediate and firm decision capability.

System should be active - directing inquiry to discover man's wants and needs rather than passive - waiting for him to specify the same.

The computer is less expensive and more objective.

V. System Features

A. General Information and Features to Include in an Improved Counseling System

Officers need to be able to get good information on what programs are open (e.g. Special Career Fields)

Simplify career information booklets

Information on available choices should be current and allow easy comparison of alternatives.

Need good information source for latest Army policies.

Explain rules used in making final decisions via consoles.
 Maintain stability and continuity of policies so that officers have a chance to learn the rules.
 Provide counselors with background statements, preference statements, records of each officer being interviewed.
 Provide capability for counselor to query officer's peers and superiors.
 "The officer could feel that he is taking an active part in his career management."
 "Counselor should be 'liable' for promises made. Promises broken make planning impossible. Impt. to have accuracy of information."
 "There is a need to know rules - they should be clear and established."
 "Each officer should be able to make his decisions and have decisions made for him, on a MAXIMUM amount of relevant data"
 It is important to know the assignments available to an officer - the type of unit, assignments that he must have for career development, etc.

B. Specific Information and Features to Include in an Improved Counseling System

"need rank among peers, why so ranked, and what to do about it."
 The system should remember the positions that the officer is particularly interested in and notify him when they open up.
 "If my 'individual characteristics' limit me to a certain list of assignments, I would like to know what "individual characteristics" would be necessary to get there."
 "In many assignments an officer actually knows very little about duties before he arrives."
 "The officer can study list for assignments and doesn't have to make quick decision."
 Allow direct communication between the man submitting the requisition and the man considering the job.
 Provide opportunity for officer to review his own record - check his status and opportunities.
 Provide information on "cultural environment in the geographical location."
 Provide information on cost of living in area.
 Assure fullest possible information available on all aspects (including small but important aspects) re position.
 Provide information on housing, civilian community, educational facilities.
 Need "How to" information e.g. "go voluntary indefinite"
 Lists of vacancies are no good if probability of getting them is not known.

VI. Miscellaneous

Army has no place for individual who just wants to do his job. It is oriented toward influencing your superior, and that is more important than doing your job well. According to this officer, there is a technique to getting good OERs.

It does not depend on skills only, but on personal contact with superiors.

His work hasn't changed over the years but his OERs have gone up because he has learned to use his personality and to deal with his commander's personality.

Provide more information to C/O so that he can properly assign and counsel men.

"I like to travel; many young officers join for this reason"

"There is a lot of chronic griping - this may influence good men not to make Army a career."

"The real problem is not need for career guidance but proper utilization."

"ROTC doesn't offer much in terms of guidance."

"Have had no problems."

"When I need career counseling, I contact my father in the Pentagon."